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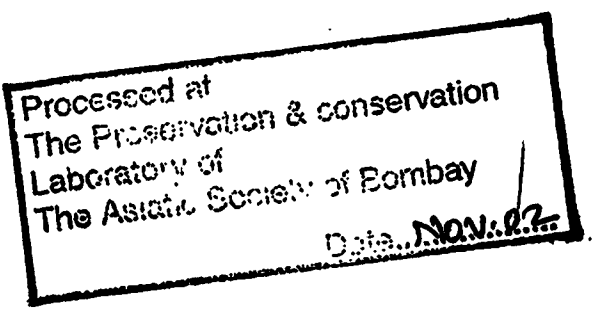
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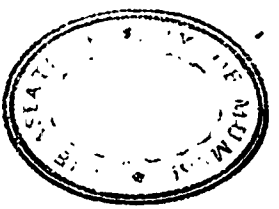
LIVES

OF THE

ARCHBISHOPS OF CANTERBURY

VOL. I.

Anglo-Saxon Period



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LIVES

OF THE

ARCHBISHOPS OF CANTERBURY.

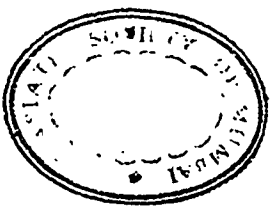
BY

WALTER FARQUHAR HOOK, D.D.
DEAN OF CHICHESTER.

VOLUME I.

ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD.

History which may be called just and perfect history is of three kinds, according to the object which it propoundeth or presenteth to represent: for it either representeth a time, or a person, or an action. The first we call Chronicles, the second Lives and the third Narratives or Relations. Of these, although Chronicles be the most complete and absolute kind of history, and hath most estimation and glory, yet Lives excelleth in profit and use, and Narratives or Relations in verity or sincerity. LORD BACON.



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TO

ROBERT HOOK,

MY ONLY BROTHER,

AND TO

GEORGIANA HOOK,

MY ONLY SISTER,

IN REMEMBRANCE OF DEAR ONES DEPARTED,

This Work is Inscribed.

PREFACE.

THE present volume of "The Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury," comprises the history of the Anglo-Saxon Church.

Such a history could not have been attempted a few years ago, as a portion only of a larger work, owing to the difficulty which existed of obtaining access to the original authorities. This difficulty has now been, in great measure, removed. The "Monumenta Historica Britannica," published by Her Majesty's command in 1848, under the able editorship of Mr. Petrie and Mr. Sharpe, has placed within reach the writings of Gildas, Nennius, Bede, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Asser, Florence of Worcester, Simeon of Durham, Henry of Huntingdon, Gaimar, and the Annales Cambriæ.

I may be permitted to add my regrets to those of every student of history, that, owing to the expense of publication, the English government has been unable to continue this series of national documents. But something in this direction has been accomplished, through the energy and sound judgment of the Master of the Rolls, Sir John Romilly. Under his sanction and by his appointment, "The Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland" are in a course of publication. In this series some

important documents have been given to the public for the first time. Of these ample use has been made in the following pages.

A vast mass of materials for history, carefully edited, has thus been supplied, in addition to what we already possessed in the collections of Parker, Savile, Camden, Wharton, Twysden, and Gale. We are deeply indebted also for many valuable works, to the various historical societies which have been called into existence by the prevalent inclination to antiquarian research.

To the impulse thus given to historical investigation we are to attribute the publication of "The Ancient Laws and Institutes of England." This publication has for its editor Mr. Thorpe, to whose learning we are indebted for many other valuable works on Anglo-Saxon history and antiquities. It contains the whole body of ecclesiastical law, as it existed in Anglo-Saxon times, together with the laws of Anglo-Saxon kings from Ethelbert to Canute; the laws of William the Conqueror, the laws of Edward the Confessor, and the laws ascribed to Henry I. These laws are frequently referred to in the following pages for the light they throw upon the religious and social life of the period.

To the same influence we may attribute the application of the great talents and profound learning of Mr. Kemble, to this department of history. His "Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici," published in 1839—1848 has taken its place among the standard works of the age, and contains perhaps the most remarkable collection of ancient documents possessed by any country.

The publication of Mr. Kemble enabled the Rev. Mr. Stubbs, M.A., late Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, to

overcome the chronological difficulties of Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical history, which before seemed to be insuperable. His "Registrum Sacrum Anglicanum" exhibits the course of episcopal succession in England from the records and chronicles of the Church, and is to be commended for its exactness, and for the critical acumen displayed by its author. In regard to the Anglo-Saxon period of our Church, the record has been constructed from a comparison of the ancient lists of bishops with the scanty memorandums of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, Simeon of Durham, Florence of Worcester, and the Annotators. The results of this comparison have been carefully tested by the signatures of charters printed in the "Codex Diplomaticus," with additional light thrown on them by the Profession Roll of Canterbury.

To Mr. Stubbs my obligations are to be expressed for his permission to consult him in my difficulties and for his supervision of the proof sheets. Had I been able, at an earlier period, to avail myself of his services, and to have submitted my entire manuscript to his inspection, the imperfections of the work would be fewer than they now are.

I may take this opportunity of exp . ing also my obligations to Vice-Chancellor Sir William Page Wood,—the friend with whom I have been accustomed to take sweet counsel for half a century,—and to the Rev. Charles Swainson, M.A., late Hulsean Lecturer of the University of Cambridge, and Prebendary of Chichester, for their friendly criticism and advice.

My thanks are due to the Rev. Henry Christmas, M.A., who placed in the hands of my publisher some collections he had made in reference to the department of history

treated on in this volume; and to the Rev. Frederick Arnold, B.A., who, in acting as my amanuensis, frequently assisted me by his suggestions.

There are so many disputable points in Anglo-Saxon history, that I have thought it expedient to refer copiously to the original authorities on which I have relied.

CHICHESTER, *November*, 1860.

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SUCCESSION

OF

ARCHBISHOPS AND CONTEMPORARY KINGS.

[When the name of only one consecrator is given, it is to be understood that at least two other bishops joined in the rite, whose names are not given by the authorities, but implied in the general formula, "assistentibus aliis episcopis." Names in italics are probable conjectures, the other statements are careful deductions from evidence.]

Archbishops.	Consecration.	Consecrators.	Accession.	Death.	Contemporary Kings.
Augustine	597	Vergilius of Arles.	597	604	Ethelbert . Kent. Ceolwulf . Wessex. Ethelfrith . Northumbria. Crida . Mercia. Pybba . Mercia. Sebert . Essex. Redwald . East Anglia.
Laurentius	604	Augustine	604	619	Ethelbert . Kent. Eadbald . Kent. Ceolwulf . Wessex. Cynegils . Wessex. Cuichelm . Wessex. Ethelfrith . Northumbria. Edwin . Northumbria. Pybba . Mercia. Sexred . Essex. Seward . Essex. Sigebert . Essex. Redwald . East Anglia.
Mellitus	604	Augustine	619	624	Eadbald . Kent. Cynegils . Wessex. Cuichelm . Wessex. Edwin . Northumbria. Pybba . Mercia. Sigebert the Little . Essex. Redwald . East Anglia.
Justus	604	Augustine	624	627	Eadbald . Kent. Cynegils . Wessex. Cuichelm . Wessex. Edwin . Northumbria. Pybba . Mercia. Penda . Mercia. Sigebert the Little . Essex. Redwald . East Anglia. Eorpwald . East Anglia.

Archbishops.	Consecration.	Consecrators.	Accession.	Death.	Contemporary Kings.
					Eadbald . . } Kent. Erconbert . }
					Cynegils . } Wessex. Cuichelm . }
					Kenwalk . . }
					Edwin . . } Northumbria. Osric . . . }
Honorius . .	627	Paulinus .	627	653	Oswald . . }
					Oswy . . . }
					Penda . . . Mercia.
					Sigebert . . Essex.
					Sigebert . } East Anglia. Egric . . }
					Anna . . . }
					Erconbert . } Kent. Egbert . . }
					Kenwalk . . Wessex.
					Oswy . . . Northumbria.
					Penda . . } Mercia. Penda . . . }
					Wulfhere . }
Deusdedit .	655	Ithamar .	655	664	Sigebert . } Essex Suithelm . }
					Sighere . . }
					Sebba . . . }
					Anna . . . } East Anglia. Ethelhred . }
					Ethelwold . }
					Aldulf . . }
					Egbert . . } Kent. Lothere . . }
					Edric . . . }
					Escwin . } Wessex. Kentwin . }
					Cædwalla . }
					Ina . . . }
Theodore . .	668	Pope Vitalian	668	690	Oswy . . . } Northumbria. Egfrid . . }
					Aldfrid . . }
					Wulfhere . } Mercia. Ethelred . }
					Sebba . . . Essex.
					Aldulf . . } East Anglia. Elwald . . }
					Elilwalch . Sussex.
					Withred . } Kent. Webberd . }
					Egbert . . }
					Ina . . . } Wessex. Ethelhard . }
Brihtwald . .	693	Godwin of Lyons	693	731	Aldfrid . . }
					Osred . . . } Northumbria.
					Kenred . . }
					Osric . . . }

Archbishops.	Consecration.	Consecrators.	Accession.	Death.	Contemporary Kings.
Brihtwald . .	693	Godwin of Lyons	693	731	Ethelred . . Kenred . . Ceolred . . Ethelbald . . Mercia. Sighard . . Seofred . . Offa . . Selred . . Essex. Elwold . . Bernred . . Ethelred . . East Anglia.
Tatwine . .	731	Daniel . . Ingwald . . Eadulf . . Aidwin . .	731	734	ut supra.
Nothelm . .	736	*Egbert* . .	735	740	Egbert . . Kent. Ethelhard . Wessex. Ceolwulf . . Eadbert . . Northumbria. Ethelbald . Mercia. Selred . . Essex. Ethelred . . East Anglia.
Cuthbert . .	736	Nothelm .	741	758	Egbert . . Ethelbert . . Kent. Ethelhard . Cuthred . . Sigebert . Cynewolf . Wessex. Eadbert . . Oswulph . Northumbria. Ethelbald . Bernred . . Offa . . . Mercia. Selred . . Suithred . . Essex. Ethelred . . Ethelbert . East-Anglia.
Bregwin . .	759	*Egbert* . .	759	765	Ethelbert . Alric . . Kent. Cynewolf . Wessex. Oswulph . Ethelwald . Northumbria. Offa . . . Mercia. Suithred . . Essex. Ethelbert . East Anglia.
Jaenbert . .	766	*Egbert* . .	766	790	Alric . . . Kent. Cynewolf . Berthric . Wessex. Ethelwald . Northumbria. Offa . . . Mercia. Ethelbert . East Anglia.
Ethelhard . .	793		793	805	Alric . . . Edbert Pren Cuthred . . Baldred . . Kent.

Archbishops.	Consecration.	Consecrators.	Accession.	Death.	Contemporary Kings.
Ethelhard	793		793	805	Berthric, Egbert, Osred, Ethelred, Osbald, Eardulf — Wessex, Northumbria. Offa, Egbert, Kenulf — Mercia. Ethelbert — East Anglia.
Wulfred	806	*Aldulf*, *Worenbert*, *Denebert*, *Eadulf*, *Wulfhard*, *Alheard*, *Tidforth*, *Osmund*, *Athmund*, *Wiothun*, *Wighert*, *Beornmod*	806	832	Egbert.
Feologild	832		832	832	Egbert.
Ceolnoth	833		833	870	Egbert, Ethelwulf, Ethelbald, Ethelbert, Ethelred.
Ethelred	870		870	889	Ethelred, Alfred.
Plegmund	890		890	914	Alfred, Edward the Elder.
Athelm	909	Plegmund	914	923	Edward the Elder.
Wulfhelm	914	Athelm	923	942	Edward the Elder, Athelstan.
Odo	926	Wulfhelm	942	958	Edmund, Edred, Edwy, Elgar.
Dunstan	957	Odo	960	988	Elgar, Edward the Martyr, Ethelred.
Ethelgar	980	Dunstan	988	989	Ethelred.
Siric	985	Dunstan	990	994	Ethelred.
Elfric	990	Siric	995	1006	Ethelred.
Elphege	984	Dunstan	1006	1012	Ethelred.
Living	999	*Lyfric*	1013	1020	Ethelred, Edmund Ironside, Canute.
Ethelnoth	1020	Wulfstan	1020	1038	Canute, Harold Harefoot.
Eadsige	1035	*Ethelnoth*	1038	1050	Harold Harefoot, Hardicanute, Edward the Confessor.
Robert	1044	*Eadsige*	1051	1052	Edward the Confessor.
Stigand	1043	Eadsige, Elfric, &c.	1052	1070	Edward the Confessor, Harold, William I.

LIVES

OF THE

ARCHBISHOPS OF CANTERBURY

BOOK I.

ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

Plan of the Work.—Church of England a National Institution.—Principles to be observed.—Motives not to be imputed to Dead or Living.—Ignorance.—Superstition.—Intolerance and Persecution.—British or Celtic Church.—British Church merged into the Anglo-Saxon.—Controversy on Easter and on the Tonsure.—Rise and Progress of Papal Supremacy.—Roman Curia.—Eucharistic Controversy.—Celibacy.—Saint-Worship.—Relics.—Terminology of the Church.—Title of Pope.—Mass.—Canonisation.—The Pall.—Monasteries.—Credulity.—Division of the Work.—A high Appreciation of modern Superiority in Wisdom and Piety not inconsistent with Veneration for past Excellence.—Character of Archbishops.

CHAP. I. Introductory.

To the history of England, subsequently to the Norman Conquest, a peculiar interest is imparted through the artistic skill by which our great historian and his followers have clustered the facts around a central personage, and pourtrayed the principles of the age in connection with the character of the Sovereign.*

* There are histories of England written on another plan, and the student will consult Dr. Henry, the "Pictorial History of England,"

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At an early period of life, the idea suggested itself to the author of the present work, that a similar interest might attach to the history of the English Church, if, placing the Primate in the centre, we were to connect with his biography the ecclesiastical events of his age, and thus associate facts which are overlooked in their insignificant isolation, and customs which, abstractedly considered, are valued only by the antiquary. A vocation to pastoral duty in the manufacturing districts demanded and exhausted his energies for five and thirty years, but he sought his recreation in the study of Ecclesiastical History, and he resumes, in his old age, a task which he unwillingly relinquished, and which, if it fail to afford amusement and instruction to others, will at least supply him with employment in the service of a Master who is not extreme to mark what is done amiss.

The work now presented to the reader is thus designed to be a History of the Church of England. The Church of England is here regarded as a national institution, which, under its various phases, has existed from the time of Augustine to the present hour. The monarchy of England is connected with the past, and preserves its unity, through the succession of its Sovereigns. In different ages, the principles of the constitution have varied; but, under all revolutions, the monarchy has continued from the time of Athelstane one and the same. Practices now denounced as iniquitous, and opinions against which we protest, were, at one time, prevalent and popular. There was a period in our history, when serfdom and slavery were tolerated; when oppression was legalised and Parliaments were silenced; when the suspected traitor

and more particularly a very able work just published, by Dr. Vaughan, "Revolutions in English History," but I doubt whether these works will ever be attractive to the general reader. We all fall back upon Hume, notwithstanding his many shortcomings and lamentable faults.

was examined by torture; and ignorance, in the garb of justice, pronounced sentence of death upon the witch and the wizard. Nevertheless, the philosophical historian traces, throughout our history, those principles of freedom which we inherited from our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, which the Conqueror could not subdue, or priestcraft annihilate, which connect the Bill of Rights with the Magna Charta, the Magna Charta with the laws of Edward the Confessor, and the laws of the Confessor with the dooms of Ethelbert; which have shaped the constitution into the marvellous system under which, invested with the full powers required by the executive government, a limited monarchy is controlled and directed by a Parliament, wherein are represented the wisdom and folly, the learning and the ignorance, the virtue and the vice, the religion and the infidelity of the nation, in proportions so nearly just, that while the will of the majority creates the law, an amount of personal liberty is secured to the minority, for which we look in vain under the despotism of a democracy, not less than under the iron hand of an autocrat.

These observations are introduced because they illustrate the position of the Church of England, and serve to show that revolutions in opinions or practice are not inconsistent with identity of institution, and that this identity is not renounced when in looking to the past we find much to regret or to condemn. In looking back upon his past life and conduct, how bitter were the self-reproaches, and how severe the self-condemnation of St. Paul: yet Saul the persecutor and Paul the Apostle were one and the self-same person. The removal of Naaman's leprosy did not destroy his personal identity: he was the same man, after he had washed in the waters of the Jordan, as he was before. And although the Church of England now repudiates many opinions which at one time she

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tolerated, and speaks with indignation of the dictation and oppression of a foreign potentate to which she during a long season submitted, the sameness of her institution is preserved in the succession of her prelates, and we admire the innate vigour which, inherited from her British and Anglo-Saxon ancestors, enabled her to avoid self-destruction, while conducting the painful processes of a long course of reformation.

The Church of England was founded at that period of time, when the Western Church, of which she was a branch, in a transition state, was passing rapidly from primitive simplicity to the mediævalism which the Church of Rome fixed as its peculiarity at the Council of Trent. The earlier history of our Church is therefore a history of its gradual corruption in doctrine, in ritual, in regimen, in discipline. A reaction took place about the time of Edward III., and ecclesiastical history becomes the record of a long series of unsuccessful attempts at reformation, and struggles for freedom, until the Reformation was established under Queen Elizabeth, although it was hardly consolidated until the period of the revolution of 1688. From that time the history of our Church has been the history of a body, in which the latitudinarian element has been struggling for the mastery, the termination of which struggle, whether in good or in evil, it will be for future historians to record.

Under all the various revolutions of sentiment, opinion, and practice, it will be the duty of the ecclesiastical historian to remind the reader of the under-current, always deep, though at some periods deeper than at others, of that genuine spirit of true Christianity, which, through the sanctifying influences of God most High, has made the Church a blessing to countless thousands unknown except to His heart-piercing eye, even when the externals have been administered by corrupt hands and in a worldly

spirit. Within the visible Church there is always a Communion of Saints—a circle within a circle, a sanctuary beyond the outer court, uncontaminated by the buyers and sellers. Like all that is worth acquiring or possessing in a fallen world, God's truth, though in the world, can only be secured and preserved by contention and struggle: as the storm is sometimes necessary to clear the atmosphere, and the lake unrippled will stagnate, so without controversies religion would degenerate or become extinct; there must needs be heresies for the trial of God's people, who would not be under temptation in this regard, if heresies were not sometimes broached by men irreproachable in their morals and acute in dialectic skill. Among the worst of heresies is that of indifferentism. But still when the heart is right, and the soul is purified by divine grace, there is in that blessed fact a bond of union which, unperceived and even repudiated here below, makes the most hostile combatants one in the contemplation of the Heavenly Hosts, and will unite them for ever in that kingdom of glory where the knowledge of truth will be intuitive, and where, in His triumph over the powers of darkness, the Master whom we serve will manifest Himself as the Prince of Peace.

The historian who is influenced by a sense of that justice which is due to the departed not less than to the living, will be mindful of the Divine precept,—"Judge not." This command does not restrain us from pronouncing an opinion on the actions of men, to decide on the merit or demerit of which the faculty of judgment is conferred upon us, but if it has any meaning at all, it must be designed to warn us against the moroseness which would trace to motives corrupt, selfish, or sordid, conduct of undenied and unquestioned excellence. There are some writers who, in the severity of their judgments, condemn themselves.

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They are infidels as to the possible existence of disinterested virtue and benevolence. But this infidelity can have been based only on their intimate acquaintance with the workings of one heart, and to deduce a universal conclusion from their consciousness of corruption and selfishness, is not only uncharitable, but illogical. Motives are mixed, and when the passions are excited, or when self-love has degenerated into selfishness, the better motives may be overpowered; but in deliberate action, when the heart is not thoroughly depraved, its first suggestion is to acts of benevolence and kindness.

We shall have to deplore corruptions in doctrine, and the crimes as well as the errors of men; but we must be careful to remark that some of the greatest deviations from truth, whether in opinion or conduct, are to be traced, not to an original intention to do wrong, but to the charitable toleration of some little evil in principle or in practice, before the fatal consequences, of which in later years we have the experience, could be predicted or foreseen; or in the acceptance of a principle known to be wrong, on the ground of its being popular and in accordance with the spirit of the age. The original motive may have been unquestionably right, although all history bears testimony to the fact, that in God's world to do evil that good may come, is as inexpedient as it is certainly an indication of infidelity, though sometimes unconscious and undeveloped.

When we amuse ourselves by referring to the ignorance of our ancestors, we must bear in mind that each age considers itself superior in light to the last; and this to a certain extent must be the case since we learn by experience. As in the individual man, so with respect to man in the aggregate, we advance in knowledge as we grow in years. But it will check presumption and pride if we look to the possible future as well as to the past, and compare it with the

present. At the present time the amount of ignorance displayed in the popular literature of the day, and in the questions asked by members of Parliament upon subjects to which public attention has not been specially directed, will be noted by some future Macaulay, and be produced for the amusement of our children's children. In the Anglo-Saxon period of our history, the mistakes in science of which our ancestors were guilty are often ludicrous; but on theological subjects, which are in the present age very generally disregarded, they were the equals, if not the superiors, of many who hold them in contempt; and even in what relates to science, — the speciality of our age, — if we are inclined to smile at the contemporaries of Roger Bacon, when they regarded him rather as a magician than as a philosopher, we may keep ourselves humble by thinking of the astonishment which will be expressed by future generations when they read that George Stephenson was accounted a madman by a Committee of the House of Commons, for devising a system of locomotion, which will render his name illustrious till time shall be no more.

There is no point on which we are more accustomed to be severe than upon the superstitions of our forefathers; they were great and grievous. We may justly censure the credulity which attributed to miracle the ordinary operations of nature, a subject to which we shall presently revert; but what will the future historian have to say of the mesmerism, the spirit-rapping, the table-turning of the nineteenth century, superstitions which are not confined to the ignorant, and to which many are addicted who think that they have established an intellectual reputation by rejecting the truths of revelation?

Again, we may remark that feelings of just indignation are excited by the iniquitous persecutions, which it is the painful duty of the ecclesiastical historian to record, as the opprobrium of Christianity and the disgrace of the

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Church. But what will the future historian have to say when the present has become a bygone generation? He will look, not to the action only, but to the principle from which it emanates. He will, on the one hand, admit that zeal for the propagation of the Gospel, and for the maintenance of God's truth, is characteristic of the Christian temper; but he will remark, on the other hand, that zeal without love ceases to be a Christian grace, and becomes a diabolical passion. That passion, he will observe, is apparent in those malignant professors of godliness who, in times past, consigned a fellow-creature to the rack or the stake for daring to differ from them in opinion. But he will point out the same malignant passion in the modern controversialists, who dip their pens in gall, or sharpen the arrows of a poisoned tongue to wound another's feelings, to expose him to the hatred of his contemporaries, or to assassinate his character. He will be able to assert, indeed, that the State, in its enlightenment or its indifference, has refused to sanction the public execution of the heretic, real or reputed; but, adverting to the anonymous letters and the many paragraphs or pamphlets issuing from the low press, with the single purpose of inflicting pain upon those who venture to differ in opinion from the fanatical religious world, he will come to the conclusion that the security we enjoy from personal injury is to be attributed less to the improvement of the religious temper than to the care of a well-organised police.

To these things reference is made, not with an intent to deny our present excellence, which in many respects is great, not to depreciate the piety of the age, which, where it exists, is practical, generous, and enlightened, but to bespeak a charitable judgment, when we shall have to recount the errors as well as the virtues of those to whose labours we are indebted for being what we are, who ploughed the field where we

are reaping the harvest. Let us regard human nature as always the same, though varying in action according to the changing circumstances in which it is placed. In every age (including our own), as the poor will never cease from the land, so the hypocrite, the fanatic, the persecutor, and the fool will be found in the Church; but let us not forget that, in every age (as well as in our own) there have been men of piety, wisdom, and charity, and that, by the providence of God, the Church, under every phase, will be protected and preserved until the coming of Him who is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, when every corrupt member being abscinded and cast away, they who are really His people, called from the ends of time, as well as the four quarters of the earth, will stand before His throne and receive their crown.

In tracing the present Church of England back to the Italian mission and the See of Canterbury, founded by Ethelbert, and of which Augustine was the first archbishop, we are not forgetful of the existence or the claims of the British Church or of the Celtic Christians, to whom, not less than to Augustine and his followers, we are indebted for the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon race.

Who were the missionaries by whom the Celts, or first known inhabitants of these islands, were originally converted, as the event occurred in the pre-historic period, it is impossible to decide. The statements made by Bede and the Anglo-Norman writers are not the records of a tradition, but the result of an ingenious exercise of the imagination on the part of chroniclers, who are aware that the pride of ancestry displays itself in nations and races as well as in families and individuals. We leave it to the antiquary and the poet to discover or surmise whether the Church was first planted in Britain by St. James, or by Simon Zelotes, or by Joseph of Arimathea, or by the

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Aristobulus mentioned by St. Paul, or by the great Apostle to the Gentiles himself, or even by St. Peter. We shall not involve ourselves in the insuperable difficulties which are presented by history and chronology to the legend of King Lucius.* We content ourselves with the authority of Tertullian † for the simple statement that the regions of Britain, inaccessible to the Romans, were subdued to Christ in the second century, and with the assertion of other authorities that this was effected by missionaries from the East, either ‡ by direct communication, or through the churches of Gaul.

The history of the British Church is, as its origin, involved in obscurity. The Anglo-Saxons, when in predominance, either destroyed the documents which came into their possession, or, through carelessness, suffered them to perish. The Welsh traditions are interesting, but not altogether trustworthy. The few facts, however, which are historical are satisfactory as to the learning, zeal, and piety of that branch of the Church, which, comprising the Irish or Scots §, the Caledonians, the Welsh, and the British, we shall describe in this book as the Celtic Church, in order to distinguish it from the Italian mission established at Canterbury. The Celtic Church in Ireland was, indeed, so renowned for the excellence of its institutions and the piety of its clergy and monks, that the island received the title of Insula Sanctorum, the Isle of Saints. The piety

* The reader who wishes to investigate these subjects, is referred to Stillingfleet, "Origines Britannicæ;" and Ussher, "Britannicarum Ecclesiarum Antiquitates."

† "Britannorum inaccessa Romanis loca, Christo vero sub lita."—*Tertul., Adv. Judæos*, c. 7.

‡ Neander: ed. Edinb. 1819, v. sec. 1.

§ The reader must bear in mind that the name of Scot belonged in the first instance to the inhabitants of Ireland. It was by degrees appropriated by the Caledonians and Picts, the gradual advance of the name marking the footsteps of the Irish missionaries.

of the Irish monasteries was not permitted however to stagnate in a soul-destroying selfishness, it was as a refreshing stream overflowing for the fertilisation of all the surrounding country. To the abundant zeal of Irish missionaries the northern provinces of Britain, associated under the name of Scotland, were indebted for their conversion, among whom stands pre-eminent the name of Columba.

At a period very little antecedent to that in which Gregory the Great complained of an apathy in the cause of missions, as seen in the bishops of Gaul, and when with difficulty he dispelled it in Italy; in the year 565, Columba crossed from Ireland in a boat made of ox-hides, and fixed his residence in the little island of Hy, which, situated to the north-west of Scotland, was afterwards reckoned as one of the Hebrides, and honoured by the name of Icolmkill, or, the Island of Columba of the Cells. Here he was surrounded by men of learning who, while seeking the edification and sanctification of their own souls, never forgot the command of the great Captain of their salvation, to preach the Gospel to every creature, — and from an assemblage of lowly structures, formed of rough-hewn wood, thatched with reeds, a monastery arose. In this retreat the Holy Scriptures were diligently studied, and books were multiplied by transcription. They conducted their mission not only by sending out preachers from their own body, but by placing similar fraternities in different parts of the country, thus providing for their convents a continual supply of the means of instruction and grace. In southern Britain the convent of Bangor was little inferior to that of Icolmkill; and that the British Church, strictly so called, was not so entirely negligent of the importance of missionary zeal to sustain the life of the Church, as is sometimes supposed, is seen in the fact that the work of Columba was

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anticipated by the labours of Ninias, a British bishop, who was an apostle to the southern provinces of the Picts. On the other hand, there was apparently a fixed determination in the whole Celtic Church not to attempt the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon race. The hatred which existed between the two races will account for, although it does not justify such conduct; and severely were the British Christians punished for permitting their sense of duty to be subdued by their angry passions. The ground which ought to have been theirs was occupied by the foreigner, and in the history of our Church they do not receive even the credit which is their due in the work of Anglo-Saxon conversion; for we are to remember that the Celtic Church after a time returned to its sense of duty, although old prejudices lingered long in Wales and Cornwall. "What pious, modest, apt sentiments," says Lappenberg, "what rare learning, what pure endeavour prevailed in the British Church, we know from the favourable testimony of an opponent, the Venerable Bede, who praises and exalts no Catholic Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastics so highly as he does those held out to them as patterns, of the Britons and Scots."* When the Celtic Church was awakened, and the duty of attempting the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons was admitted, the success of its missionaries, though often overlooked, is as remarkable as it is praiseworthy. The northern half of Anglo-Saxon Britain was indebted for its conversion to Christianity, not to Augustine and the Italian mission, but to the Celtic missionaries who passed

* Lappenberg, i. 134. We ought not to be too severe in our condemnation of the Britons, for their reluctance to adopt measures for the conversion of the Saxons. The wrongs they received had been awful in the extreme. Less to be justified are some among our contemporaries, who refuse to support a mission to Central Africa, simply on the ground that it is not supported by some favourite Missionary Society, or for some other reason which can only be suggested by the pre-existence of prejudice or passion.

through Bernicia and Deira into East Anglia, Mercia, and even Wessex.

But while we are not forgetful of the claims which may be urged upon our gratitude by the Celtic branches of the Church, which, we incline to think, have been understated by the historian, it is, nevertheless, through Augustine that we deduce that succession of the Christian ministry which connects the present Church of England with the primitive and Apostolic Church through the Gallican; because the various branches of the Celtic Church gradually merged into the Anglo-Saxon. It is the main stream that we trace to its source; the rills which have swollen its mass of waters, though by no means to be despised, become only of secondary consideration, except to the local geographer. The English people are formed by the fusion of the Celtic and Teutonic races; they are indistinguishably united, although the Anglo-Saxon element predominates: and so also in the Church of England we do not ignore the Celtic Church, but, as an historical fact, we regard it as absorbed into the patriarchate of Canterbury.

For a short season the Celtic Church stood aloof from the Italian mission, as we shall have occasion to relate. The immediate controversy had reference to things as insignificant as the observance of a festival, and an arrangement of the hair. We have ourselves seen men prevented only by the police from resorting to acts of violence on questions relating to a black gown or a white, and to the introduction of flowers into a church. We are therefore able to understand the violence with which men discussed the subject of Easter, and the perseverance with which each party adhered to its peculiar tonsure.

The British were not, as some persons have supposed, Quartodecimans. The Quartodecimans, in the second century, kept Easter according to the Jewish Passover, whe-

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ther falling on Sunday or not. This controversy was settled at the Council of Nice, when it was determined that Easter should be always celebrated on the Lord's Day. We have the authority of the Emperor Constantine himself for saying that the Britons, as well as other nations, observed Easter as the Council of Nice directed.* But the Easter festival being regulated by the commencement of the equinoctial lunation, it began according to the calculation of Dionysius Exiguus, adopted generally by the churches of the West, as early as the fifth, while according to the Alexandrian calculation, it could not begin before the eighth of March. The Celtic Church, or the British and Irish Christians, adhered to the Alexandrian rule. They were manifestly in error, but owing to the haughtiness with which the Italians had demanded an alteration in their calendar, they doggedly determined not to change their *mumpsimus* into a *sumpsimus*. The peculiar tonsure became the badge of party in either case.

The tonsure had gradually become the peculiarity in the outer man which marked the clergyman. During the first four centuries we do not read of the clergy assuming any peculiarity of appearance, except when engaged in the offices of the Church. They naturally avoided it, as the adoption of a distinguishing habit would have marked them for persecution. But as the adoption of a black coat or a white neckcloth marks the clergyman in these days, and as these clerical peculiarities of attire came in, we scarcely can say how or when, so it was with respect to the clerical tonsure in the middle ages. One of the fashions against which a certain portion of the clergy were wont to preach, was the wearing of long hair by the men, a custom prevalent among northern nations, but denounced as encouraging effeminacy and vanity.

* Euseb., De Vit. Constant. lib. iii. c. 19.

Those who preached against the long locks of the laity were soon distinguished from the laity by clipping their hair; and the custom commended itself the rather, because as a black coat with us is the sign of mourning, so to shave the head was, among the natives of the East, a ceremony expressive of affliction. After a time, different fashions were adopted by the clerical tonsors, and minute philosophers discovered something emblematical in the manner in which the scissors were directed. The Eastern clergy were accustomed to shave the entire front of the head, leaving the hair on the hinder part untouched; and to this custom the British clergy, true to their Eastern origin, adhered: whereas the Italians shaved their heads according to what they called the tonsure of St. Peter, which consisted of a circle of hair round the shorn head, supposed to represent the crown of thorns, and called therefore the coronal tonsure. So completely was this considered a party badge, that when Wilfrid left the Celtic party for the Italian, the first thing he did was to submit his head to the scissors of a Roman barber.* To such an extent could party feeling be carried in that age, as in our own, that the Italians accused their opponents of wearing the mark of Simon Magus.†

* Eddi., c. 6.

† The tonsure was not first introduced by the monks. The monks were not originally ecclesiastics. They were laymen; but as they soon became ambitious of holy orders, so did they early assume the clerical attire and appearance. See Guizot, Hist. of Civilisation, ii. sec. xiii.: ed. Bogue, 1846, p. 37: — "Down to the sixth century, the tonsure took place at the time of entering into orders; it was regarded as the sign of ordination, *signum ordinis*. Dating from the sixth century, we find the tonsure conferred without any admission into orders; instead of being *signum ordinis*, it was called *signum destinationis ad ordinem*. The principle of the Church had hitherto been, *tonsura ipsa est ordo*, 'tonsure is the order itself.' She maintained this principle, with this explanation, tonsure is the order itself, but in the largest sense of the term, and as a preparation to the divine service."

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But it will be seen at once that these subjects were only employed as pretexts for dispute among parties separated, not by any substantial difference of opinion or divergence of doctrine, but by prejudice and passion. The predominance of these passions did not last long among men equally sincere and zealous, and the fusion of the Celtic Church into the Anglo-Saxon, for such it was rather than an union, was effected, so far as the main branches were concerned, at an early period.

It is sometimes supposed and maintained that the Celtic Church stood aloof from the Italian mission, from a salutary dread of a Papal aggression. But this is said on the assumption that the Papal power and pretensions were at that time what they are now, or what they were in the time of Hildebrand, a concession acceptable to controversialists, but which the stubborn facts of history will by no means permit us to grant. The Bishop of Rome was at that time universally an object of respect, and his church and city were to the semi-barbarous nations of the north and west of Europe the ideal of excellence and grandeur. The Roman authorities had, indeed, begun to push the claims of their bishops beyond their due limits, and were, though generally successful, on some occasions stoutly resisted; but what the Celtic Church feared was not so much the distant Bishop of Rome as the establishment of an irresistible pope at Canterbury.*

* "In some states finally, especially in the East, the organisation of the Church extended beyond the archbishops. As they had constituted parishes into the diocese, and the dioceses into the province, they undertook to constitute provinces into national churches, under the direction of a patriarch. The undertaking succeeded in Syria, in Palestine, in Egypt, in the Eastern Empire; there was a patriarch at Antioch, at Jerusalem, at Constantinople; he was, with regard to archbishops, what archbishops were to bishops; and the ecclesiastical organisation corresponded in all degrees of the hierarchy with the political organisation.

"The same attempt took place in the West, not only on the part of

One of the fallacies to be avoided in the study of Ecclesiastical History is that which arises from an exaggerated notion of Papal authority in the earlier portion of the middle ages. The Papal power was the result of a struggle, and a struggle implies incompleteness, claims made and resisted. To mark the stealthy progress of Papal power is instructive as a lesson and useful as a warning.

The real foundation of Papal supremacy rests upon the establishment, at an early period, of an appellate jurisdiction in Rome. Until the publication of the Pseudo-Isidore Decretals *, at the close of the eighth century, the appellate jurisdiction rested for its authority on certain canons of the Council of Sardica.† At that council the resolutions passed were so obscurely worded that we can scarcely find two commentators who are agreed in their interpretation of them. They certainly did not give authority to the Pope to evoke causes to Rome, or to summon bishops *ex officio*, or to renew or set aside the judgments of councils. Nevertheless, under certain restrictions, they invested the Bishop of Rome with authority to receive and to try appeals. A court of error was in short established in Rome, and it was endowed with powers similar to those which are exercised by the judicial

the bishops of Rome, who laboured at an early period to become the patriarchs of the whole West, but independently of their pretensions, and even against them. There are scarcely any of the states formed after the invasion of the barbarians, which did not attempt, from the sixth to the eighth century, to become a national church, and to have a patriarch. In Spain, the Archbishop of Toledo; in England, the Archbishop of Canterbury; in Frankish Gaul, the Archbishop of Arles, of Vienne, of Lyons, of Bourges, bore the title of primate or patriarch, of Gaul, of Great Britain, of Spain, and attempted to exercise all its rights."—*Guizot, Hist. of Civilisation*, ii. 47.

* See Life of Ethelred.

† The whole subject is concisely stated by the late Professor Hussey in his "Rise and Progress of the Papal Power."

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Committee of Privy Council in England at the present time. People murmured, doubted the legality of the court, and yet submitted to its decisions. But whatever were the powers conceded to the Bishop of Rome by the Council of Sardica, another question had been started as to the authority of the council itself. The Council of Sardica was convened by the Emperors Constantius and Constans in the year 347. The emperors designed it to be a general council, but a general council it was not, for it was attended only by bishops of the Western Church. The Orientals retired to Philippopolis, and there formed a synod of their own. The Eastern Church, therefore, either rejected the Sardican canons entirely, or contended that they were applicable only to the suburbican provinces of the Roman patriarchate, a similar jurisdiction being claimed for the Patriarch of Constantinople.*

Theodorus, the great prelate by whom the Church of England, when it ceased to consist of mere missionary stations, was organised, and placed on its present basis, was himself a Greek, and evinced his opinion of the Sardican canons when he contemned, rather than resisted, the decision of the Roman courts on the appeal made by Wilfrid to the Pope. He infused such a spirit of independence into the church of his adoption, that with the single exception of Wilfrid's, no appeal was made to Rome by any prelate of our Church during the Anglo-Saxon times. We find, throughout this period, an extreme admiration of everything connected with Rome. Rome was regarded as the centre of civilisation, the capital of the world, a connection with which added dignity to kings and prelates. The Roman bishop was frequently con-

* See the Greek comments of Balsamon and Zonaras, Beveridge's dicon, i. 489. The Roman authorities betrayed a consciousness of weakness in their endeavour to confound the Sardican with the Nicene canons.

sulted; his advice was often gratefully received. There was, nevertheless, a determined resistance offered from time to time to any unasked for interference on the part of Rome with the Church of England, where the national institutions, synod, and Witenagemot were regarded as sovereign, and the appellant from them, in the only one appeal made to Rome from a national synod, was regarded as a traitor, degraded and imprisoned.

Still the progress of the Papal power was rapid and wonderful; and this must be attributed to that oneness in aim and act which is observable in all the Papal proceedings. So remarkable is this circumstance, that to it we may trace the Puritan notion, that by the Pope is meant an incarnation of the evil one, who, from the time of the Apostles to the present hour, has been actively employed in the destruction of souls, and in the elevation of himself to an equality with the Deity.

When this imaginary abstraction is viewed by the historian in its fragmentary parts, we find human nature, whether in a Pope or in a Puritan, always the same. Among the occupants of the Roman see there have been men good, bad, and indifferent; some eminent for their learning, integrity, and piety; others disgracing their station by vicious conduct and imbecility of mind; some leaving upon the age the impress of their character, and infusing new life into the institutions of their Church; while others, by their impolicy or misconduct, may have brought the whole system into peril. We find it as difficult to distinguish in a Hildebrand as in a Cromwell, between the genius and fanaticism, the integrity and hypocrisy, the public spirit and the self-seeking, which raised them sometimes to the very pinnacle of human greatness, and at other times brought them down to the lowest condition of meanness. These are not the elements from which a uniform system of policy was likely to be

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formed; and, what is more remarkable, between the years 752 and 955, the period when the Papal power was making very rapid strides, there were no fewer than *forty-three* popes, of whom eleven reigned less than a year, and seven not more than six months. These men had not the time, even if they had possessed the ability, to create a policy; and the policy of Rome was one and consistent, because it did *not* depend upon the popes. The appellate jurisdiction claimed by the Church of Rome, and, to a great extent, admitted by the European churches, gave existence to the Roman Curia, which in its various committees and subordinate courts conducted the affairs of the Church; yielding to suggestions for its extension and aggrandisement, when a master mind was called to the Papal throne; and when the weak or the wicked were at the head, distinguishing with metaphysical precision and subtlety between the demerits of the man and the authority of the functionary.

Commissioners and correspondents, under various high sounding titles, were employed in all parts of Europe to secure business for the Roman courts, and all who were aggrieved, were, by the very virtue of their appeal nearly sure to obtain friends at Rome, and the redress for which they humbled themselves. The Italian aristocracy had sought to replenish their coffers at the expense of the Church; lawyers found fees, and agents a profitable employment; while the tradesmen of Rome regarded with feelings of no ordinary interest, an institution which brought customers to the city. Great men received presents, underlings were bribed; every artifice was resorted to which might increase the business and advance the influence of this "ecclesiastical commission;" and at last, when it undertook to decide upon doctrine, its decisions were enunciated by one who was represented as the suc-

cessor of St. Peter, sitting in St. Peter's chair, and acting with St. Peter's authority.

These observations may serve to remind us that there are several rules to be observed, and certain principles to be laid down, if we would understand the complications of mediæval Christianity and of the Anglo-Saxon Church.

I. It is necessary to observe, on the one hand, that mediæval doctrines and customs, wheresoever they differ from those of the primitive Church, were of very gradual formation; and, on the other hand, that long before an opinion became a dogma of the Church, or a ceremonial was established as a positive ordinance, a predisposition to their acceptance or adoption existed and was developed. An example may be produced.

It is well known, for instance, as an historical fact, that the doctrine of the Eucharist, with reference to the physical change in the elements, according to which the sacrament is no longer bread and wine after consecration, but only the Body and Blood of our Blessed Lord;—the same in all respects as that which was born of the Virgin Mary, was not made an article of faith in any branch of the Christian Church before the year 1215. It was then, for the first time, declared to be a doctrine of the Western Church by Innocent III. About* the year 847, transubstantiation is referred to by Rabanus Maurus as a doctrine broached by some individuals "unsoundly thinking of late."† The language of Alcuin‡ and of the Anglo-Saxon Homilies§ is quoted to show that the doctrine of transubstantiation was not a doctrine of our own Church during the Anglo-Saxon period. We must, at the same time,

* Cave gives the date of this epistle as 853.

† Ad Heribaldum, c. 33: ed. Migne, iv. 493.

‡ Alc. Opp.: ed. Froben, i. 528.

§ Ælfric in Routh's Opuscula, ii. 167.

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admit that long antecedently to the authoritative assertion of the dogma, the whole tendency of the religious world was towards this superstition, and that the sacraments, being regarded not merely as means of grace to persons duly qualified by repentance and faith for its reception,—but as charms operative upon the worthy and unworthy alike, were supposed to be attended by a kind of magical effect, and were, in consequence, not unfrequently approached from unworthy motives.

II. We should be careful not to attribute to design on the part of those who were at the head of affairs, proceedings to which they were urged by the spirit of the age, or the fanaticism of the religious world. A man like Hildebrand could see, for instance, how important an element in his line of policy would be the constrained celibacy of the clergy; but even he could not have carried the measure, which he only succeeded in doing partially, if the whole moral force of the religious feeling had not been on his side. It was not till the year 1059 that priests who lived in wedlock were forbidden to celebrate the sacred offices, and the defenders of the married life of the clergy denounced as heretics.

In the portion of history comprised in the first book, we shall have frequent occasion to refer to this feeling. Many among the clergy, and some even of the monks, were married men.* But while the clergy were vindicating their Christian liberty, the married clerks were regarded with a dislike continually increasing by those among the laity who made a special profession of godliness. Their

* Churton observes that Elfsy, bishop of Winchester in Elfric's time, was a married prelate, whose son Godwin died in battle against the Danes, and that Aldhun, bishop of Durham, was also married, having a daughter who became the wife of one of the earls of Northumberland. Early English Church, 263. But it was seldom that the married clergy were elevated to the higher stations of the church.

persons and property were frequently assaulted; they were objects of ridicule and contempt, and there were not a few who would refuse to hear the Gospel, if preached by a married clergyman, and would utterly decline the sacraments, if administered by his unholy hands. The laity exaggerated the dignity of the ministerial office, and thought that "the clergy should live as unearthly beings, not coming into contact with the things of sense." * The fault of those who ought to have directed the public mind was this, that they were first under the influence of the fanaticism, and then sought to turn it to account; a mode of proceeding not unusual.

III. We must note that many grave errors originated in customs which were at first countenanced by wise and good men for the sake of their practical utility. The Church of England, as we shall see, united with the Gallican and German Churches in denouncing, under the teaching of Alcuin and the authority of Charlemagne, all image-worship, even after it had been openly sanctioned at Rome. No one was stronger in his denunciation of image-worship than Gregory the Great. But he permitted, and so did the divines of Frankfort, the use of images as historical memorials; and, in an ignorant age, the subtle explanations of a learned few were unable to stop the progress of superstition. The same thing occurred with regard to saint-worship. The saints were not worshipped in the early portion of the middle ages; but in the extreme regard for relics there was the germ of the error. Respect for relics, when it originated, was inconsistent with the worship of the saints. It proceeded from a belief in the efficacy, not of their merits, but of their intercession. Their merits could not depend upon place, but it was supposed that their intercession did. We are permitted to pray with and for one

* Neander.

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another while we are in the flesh,—why, it was asked, should not this intercession be carried on by those who have gone before us to the Church triumphant? When the question received an answer affirmative of the conclusion which the querist intended to be drawn, the next question was, where the spirits of the departed were most likely to be found. The religious world concluded that they would be near their remains, and consequently the relics of pious men were carefully preserved, and in the place where they were deposited they were expected to unite with the worshippers, who, as they asked for the prayers of the living, would say also to the dead man, *Ora pro nobis.*

IV. The terminology of the Church has not been materially changed, but the reader will be involved in inextricable difficulties, who does not recollect that the same terms do not always convey the same meaning at every period of history; and this observation applies to the titles of persons as well as to the designation of things. The title of Pope is applied to Gregory the Great and to Gregory VII.; but that title did not convey precisely the same idea when Gregory the Great refused to be called the Universal Bishop, denouncing the notion which such a denomination conveys as anti-Christian*, and when Gregory VII. not only accepted the title, which already had been adopted by some of his predecessors, but acted on the powers which the name implies.

In the time of Gregory the Great, and, as some writers

* "Towards the end of this period, the flame of controversy was again kindled between the two first patriarchs of Christendom, when John Jejunator began to assume the title of a Patriarcha Universalis, οἰκουμενικός (587). Even Pelagius II. grew very warm respecting it, and still more Gregory the Great. These popes rejected that appellation altogether, as anti-Christian and devilish."—*Giesler, Eccl. Hist.* ii. 131.

say, till the tenth century, the title of Pope (Papa) was given to all bishops in general; and the title itself, therefore, was not the same as it is now, when, so far as the Western Church is concerned, it is confined exclusively to designate the Bishop of Rome.*

The word Mass, as applied to the Communion Office, assumed a very different meaning after the adoption of the doctrine of transubstantiation from that which pertained to it in earlier times.†

I have not given the title of Saint to any of our archbishops, although from some of them this title has not been withdrawn in our calendar. The first instance we have of canonisation, *i.e.* the insertion of a name in the Canon or list of saints, occurs in the year 993, when a certain Ulric, Bishop of Augsburg, was enrolled among the saints, at a council assembled that year at Rome under Pope John XV. ‡ Ulric's holiness was attested by stories of miracles alleged to have been performed by him when alive and dead. The power of canonising the dead was not indeed at this time confined to the Pope; it was exercised by the metropolitans of different national

* Döllinger, ii. 219: ed. London, 1840.

† The name mass, originally imported nothing more than the dismission of a church assembly; by degrees it came to be used for an assembly, and for church service; so easily do words shift their sense, and represent new ideas. From signifying church service in general, it came at length to denote the Communion Service in particular, and so that most emphatically came to be called the Mass. St. Ambrose is reasonably supposed to be the earliest writer now extant who mentions mass in that emphatical sense. Higher authorities have been pretended; but they are either from the spurious Decretal Epistles, or from liturgical offices of modern date in comparison. See Waterland on the Eucharist, Works, vii. 43: ed. Oxford, 1823. These observations are made, not with reference to their theological bearing, with which I am not here concerned, but as necessary to elucidate the history as it advances in our first book.

‡ Mansi, xix. 169.

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churches, but with so little discrimination, that the world was likely to be inundated with saints, some of rather questionable holiness, when Alexander III. declared canonisation to be one of those "greater causes" which belong to the Roman see alone.*

In earlier times the title of Saint was given, by courtesy, to theologians to mark their orthodoxy, or the acceptance of their writings by the Church, in contradistinction to those of heretics; and just as a barrister in these days is spoken of as a "learned gentleman," without reference to the amount of his learning, sanctity was in the fourth century predicated of every orthodox divine, the very fact of his orthodoxy being regarded as a kind of inferior inspiration. It will be apparent from this statement that it is one thing to speak of a saint in the primitive Church, and before the introduction of saint-worship—to concede the title to St. Cyprian or St. Athanasius,—and quite a different thing to accept its application after the adoption of the system of canonisation in the tenth and subsequent centuries, when the question related, not to a man's orthodoxy attested by his writings, but to his power of working miracles.

In our first book it is particularly important that the caution here given should be observed, when mention will be made of the pall or pallium, frequently granted by the popes of Rome and accepted by the archbishops of Canterbury. By a canon passed in the Council of Lateran in the year 1215, and afterwards transcribed into the Decretals, it was enacted that the pall should be regarded as a mark of the fulness of apostolic power; and while every archbishop was, before receiving it, inhibited from the performance of any functions peculiar to the metropolitan office as distinguished from the episcopal, an oath of allegiance to the Pope was to be taken like

* Mosheim: ed. Soames, ii. 427. Pagi on Baronius, xvi, A° 993.

that sworn by subjects to their sovereign. The pall had by this time probably assumed its modern shape, and become a mere ornament, the form of which may be seen in the archiepiscopal arms of Canterbury, Armagh, and Dublin. It is described as consisting of a strip of woollen cloth worn across the shoulders, to which are appended two other strips of the same material, one of them falling over the breast, and the other hanging down the back, each marked with a red cross, and the whole tacked on to the rest of the dress by three golden pins. But this was not the pallium, in its shape or signification, which was used in the time of Gregory the Great and Augustine of Canterbury. The pallium then in use was a splendid robe of state, flowing from the shoulders to the feet. It had formed a portion of the imperial vestments, to wear which, without the consent of the emperor, was by the Roman law, a commission of the crime *læsæ majestatis*. In accordance with Eastern habits, with which we are familiar, such consent was occasionally given, as a mark of distinction and favour, to philosophers and men of learning. The honour was, in process of time, conferred upon eminent churchmen by the emperors, especially upon the patriarchs, including the Bishop of Rome. Not long before the time of Gregory the Great, the popes of Rome were permitted to grant the pallium to prelates of the Western Church, but as Gregory himself states, not before the imperial sanction was obtained.* It was not in his time the mark of the metropolitan dignity, for it was conferred also upon suffragan bishops.† It was not an

* Greg. Epp. lib. vii. ep. 5.

† "These investitures became more frequent under Gregory the Great, not only of metropolitans, as John of Corinth, John of Prima Justiniana, Virgilius of Arles, Augustine of Canterbury, but also simple bishops, as of Donus of Messina, John of Syracuse, John of Palermo, &c. See Pertsch, De Origine, &c., Pallii, p. 134."—*Giesseler*, ii. 133.

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emblem of authority—it was not a token of dependence upon the Roman see—it was simply a mark of favour and personal consideration on the part of the donors. It was regarded much in the same light as the blue ribband is by the English aristocracy at the present time: as the recipient of an order in these days pledges himself to a general support of the government through which the honour is conferred, so were those who received the pallium, in the earlier portion of Anglo-Saxon history, regarded as the supporters and adherents of the Bishop of Rome, but not by any sacrifice of their independence, or by any definite pledge.*

When our earlier archbishops were ambitious of the pallium, they sought it as an honour, they did not receive it as a pledge of servitude.

V. Although we may regard with complacency the abolition of an institution, which in its corruption had become detrimental to the cause of civilisation and true religion, we are not to ignore the benefits which in a different state of society it may have conferred upon mankind, neither may we think scorn of the piety and virtue of its founders and promoters, because what was piously designed may have resulted in failure.

Monastic institutions originated in the East, and were not at first regarded as ecclesiastical establishments. †

* De Marca, "De Concordiâ Sacerdotii et Imperii, seu de libertatibus Ecclesiæ Gallicanæ," is the great authority on this subject. See also Collier and Inett.

† "The term, regular clergy, is calculated to produce an illusory effect, it gives one the idea that the monks have always been ecclesiastics, have always essentially formed a part of the clergy, and this is, in point of fact, the general notion which has been applied to them indiscriminately, without regard to time or place, or to the successive modifications of the institution. And not only are monks regarded as ecclesiastics, but they are by many people considered as, so to speak, the most ecclesiastical of all ecclesiastics, as the most completely of all

From the habitual debaucheries of heathen society, many whose hearts had been purified by Christian doctrine, sought refuge in the deserts; and in renouncing their property, the sacrifice was not great, for the insecurity of wealth when no police existed, filled its possessors with anxiety and care, from which they were eager to escape after their minds had been fixed upon holier things.* The animal wants in a hot climate were few, so far as the requisites of food and clothing were concerned; and the temptations to which the passions unrestrained in childhood exposed them, they found it more easy to fly than to resist. The first recluses dwelt in hermitages. The instinctive love of society brought the huts of the hermits into proximity, and they multiplied into a monastery. The monastery of the learned and refined, if we may judge from the description of St. Basil's retreat, resembled an English parsonage. But a desire to lead a monastic life grew into a passion, and the deserts were peopled by the rude and unlettered. Then rules and regulations were required, and in the tendency of the age to excess, discipline became asceticism. Manual labour was permitted to supply the place of intellectual exertion, and at one period, the monks of the East became a rabble ready to inundate the towns, at the command of the ambitious or the fanatical, whose passions were the fiercer,

clerical bodies separated from civil society, as the most estranged from its interest and from its manners. This, if I mistake not, is the impression which the mere mention of their name at present, and for a long time past, naturally arouses in the mind; it is an impression full of error: at their origin, and for at least two centuries afterwards, the monks were not ecclesiastics at all; they were mere laymen, united together indeed by a common religious creed, in a common religious sentiment, and with a common religious object, but altogether apart from the ecclesiastical society, from the clergy, especially so called."—*Guizot, Hist. of Civilisation in France*, ii. 61.

* We obtain from St. Chrysostom's Homilies on the Statues, a curious insight into the condition of contemporary society.

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because they assumed the character of religious zeal, and zeal instead of charity was supposed to cover a multitude of sins. On the one theological point which formed the controversy of the day, they were malignantly learned, and they regarded as the enemies of their God all who might differ from themselves in opinion.

Monasticism was introduced into the West under a milder form, and was mainly instrumental in the conversion of the pagan or village population. Christianity first settled in the towns, whence missionaries passed into the rural districts; but no great impression was made upon the servile population until the villas of the Roman patricians were occupied by monks, who themselves became cultivators of the soil, and could address as brethren and in the terms of equality and brotherly love, the slaves whom they set at liberty, in order that they might be taught to serve Him whose service is perfect freedom, — our Father which is in heaven. The sagacity of Gregory the Great was not slow to perceive the advantages afforded by these institutions to a cause ever near to his heart; and by him monasteries were converted into missionary colleges in the towns, as they had already become missionary stations in the country.

Augustine entered Canterbury surrounded by monks as well as by clergy, and when he laid the foundation of that monastery, which was afterwards called by his own name, it was designed for a missionary college: a purpose to which modern piety has once more consecrated its site. Under the successors of Augustine, and in those parts of the country already occupied by the Celtic Church, the monasteries had very much of the character and appearance of Moravian establishments, or rather of those stations established in Africa by the Bishop of Cape Town. The institution was a lay institution connected with the Church, resembling in this respect the colleges of our

Universities, and although some of the monks had already been ordained, they formed the exception rather than the rule. The resemblance to our modern colleges became the greater, when the country being converted and the Church established, Archbishop Theodorus converted the monasteries into seats of learning.

But a proceeding very similar to that which we have described as occurring in the East, now took place in England. Through the civilising processes of Christianity the more gentle virtues of our nature were cultivated, and men began to loathe the excesses of the mead-hall and the boisterous mirth of their associates, leading too often to intoxication, and terminating in broils and bloodshed. But to live a sober, righteous, and godly life in camps, or courts, or castellated mansions, where revelry and rioting had obtained a kind of prescriptive right, was a matter more easy to desire than to effect. On the other hand, in the insecurity of life and property which must prevail in a thinly populated country abounding in forests and fens, the abode or resort of the bandit and the robber, a country house, such as meets the eye now at every turn, was a thing impossible. The thane or nobleman desirous of enjoying the comforts of a rural retreat, where he might devote himself to prayer and study, was obliged to surround himself for the mere purpose of self-preservation, with retainers and attendants. But if those attendants had been taken indiscriminately from his former followers and comrades, his place of residence would have been changed but not his mode of life. He consequently surrounded himself with persons of congenial spirit and temper; he drew up the rules which he thought necessary for the government of his household, subjecting them probably to the inspection of the bishop, and constituted himself the president or abbot. He does not appear to have considered constant residence at his

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monastery necessary: he still engaged in the affairs of the world, and resorted to his monastery as an occasional retreat. By the kings privileges and immunities were granted to these institutions, which eventually led to their corruption.

Ladies of rank pursued a similar course; and hence arose a custom which strikes those as singular who become acquainted with it for the first time, although it was far from uncommon among the northern nations: I refer to the custom of double monasteries. When a lady had selected her residence, and surrounded herself with a sisterhood, and established a nunnery, she required her domain to be cultivated to meet their wants; and for the conversion, or the religious instruction of her tenants and labourers, she had to make provision. A church was accordingly erected; and to serve the church, as well as to instruct the people, clergy and monks were required: they lived together, they became Cœnobites; and so a monastery was formed;—the convents both for the men and for the women being under the direction and government of the lady of the manor, who constituted herself the abbess.* We have authority for saying that some of these establishments answered the purposes for which they were instituted, and were for a time the abodes of virtue and religion; but it is easy to foresee how liable they were to abuse and corruption in a rude age, as soon as the first fervours of enthusiastic piety subsided; and although the corruptions of these lay monasteries were, in all probability, exaggerated by zealous reformers, who were intent upon converting all monasteries into ecclesiastical

* The celebrated monastery at Whitby was a double monastery, over which St. Hilda presided. Lingard informs us that the system of the double monasteries was introduced from France (Antiq. of Anglo-Saxon Church, i. 196); and besides Whitby, he mentions Barking, Coldingham, Ely, Wenlock, Repandun and Wimborne.

institutions, there can be no doubt that the corruptions were at one period very great.

It is from the accusers of these establishments that we gain some information as to the conduct of their inmates. The monastic dress was not generally adopted. In some monasteries the abbot might be seen in the same attire as other men of his own station in society, with his mantle of blue cloth, faced with crimson silk, and ornamented with stripes or vermicular figures.* We find them addicted to war, to hunting, to hawking, to games of chance, to the company of minstrels and jesters. In some of the nunneries also the lady abbess would appear in a scarlet tunic, with full skirts and wide sleeves and hood, over an under-vest of fine linen of a violet colour. Her face was painted with stibium, her hair was curled with irons over the forehead and temples; ornaments of gold encircled the neck, bracelets were seen on her arms, and rings with precious stones on her fingers, the nails of which were pared to a point, to resemble the talons of a falcon. The shoes were of red leather.† In the stricter convents, a more sober dress was adopted; but this was the dress of the ladies of fashion, the "flammeæ puellæ," as they were called by Lullus‡; and such we are informed some of the abbesses remained. These vanities, on the part of both men and women, imply the existence of much social intercourse, and Alcuin complains of "secret junketings and furtive compotations;" while the nuns were forbidden to write or send amatory verses, and abbesses were warned that there should not be any dark corners in their houses, as advantage was taken of them for mischief.§ Many in-

* Ep. S. Bonif. cv.: ed. Serar, p. 149.

† Aldhelm, De Laud. Virg. 307, 364.

‡ Lullus, Ep. inter Bonifacianas, xlv. p. 63; quoted by Lingard, Hist. Ang.-Sax. Church, i. 210: ed. 1858.

§ Pertz, i. 93. Council of Aix-la-Chapelle, c. 14.

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deed are the indignant remonstrances of Bede and Alcuin on the subject; and it is impossible to understand the object and proceedings of many among our Anglo-Saxon archbishops, or the canons passed in their synods, unless we have some idea of the state of the monastic establishments, for the reform of which means were early taken, if not always wise, yet generally well intended. By some writers it is said that the Benedictine system was introduced by Augustine and Wilfrid, and observed in the monasteries in which Bede was educated or resided. It is not probable, however, that this could have been strictly true; for Gregory the Great, although, in his life of Benedict of Nursia, he extols his rule, did not introduce it into his cloister of St. Andrew at Rome, over which Augustine had presided before his mission to England. This house Gregory intended to be a seminary for priests and missionaries. Here he devoted to study the time which Benedict devoted to labour; and we are told by Pope Honorius himself, that in the cloister which Augustine founded in Canterbury, he followed the rule of Gregory.* Besides, strictly speaking, the Benedictine Order, in the modern sense of the word, was not completed until the reformation of the second Benedict, and Benedict of Aniane died in 821. The grand object of Odo and Dunstan was to reform the monastic system by the introduction of the Benedictine rule, but during the whole of the Saxon period there were no Provincials, Generals, Chapters, or Congregations; no monastic hierarchy; each founder of a monastery made his own rules, and each abbot altered them at his own convenience; and all that we can say is, that the stricter abbots may have adopted the regulations of Benedict as their model, and that in these the Benedictine spirit prevailed; but before Dunstan's time we may doubt

* Dollinger, ii. 285. Bede, ii. 18.

the existence anywhere in England of the Benedictine rule in its completeness.*

These explanations and remarks are necessarily made in the introductory chapter of a work which will not consist of historical dissertations or of theological discussions, but which contains simply a narrative of facts, whether bearing upon events or opinions. Where facts are disputable, the conclusion at which the author, after investigation, has arrived, is given in the text, and the authorities will be referred to in the notes to enable the reader to deduce the opposite inference, if the conclusions of the author are not supported by his premisses.

After this statement the author must not pass by without notice a difficulty which meets us at the very outset of our inquiries: in what light are we to regard mediæval miracles?

Without wishing to dictate to others, I feel it due to the reader that I should state my own opinion upon a subject which will frequently force itself upon our notice in the course of our work. It appears to me to be inconsistent with the principles of our holy religion to expect the performance of miracles under the Christian dispensation. According to the economy of means which we see in all the works of our Creator, miracles would not be permitted to take place, if not absolutely necessary, and miracles cannot be necessary in a Church which possesses a completed Bible; they had only been employed as the credentials of the messengers of God, and their employment is no

* This is stated expressly by Osbern, in his life of Dunstan. "Nondum enim in Angliâ communis ratio Vitæ colebatur; non usus deserendi proprias voluntates hominibus affectabatur. Abbatis nomen vix quispiam audierat. Conventus monachorum non satis quisquam viderat. Sed cui fortè id voluntatis erat, ut peregrinam vellet transigere vitam; is modò solus, modò paucis ejusdem propositi comitatus, patrios fines egrediebatur; et qua opportunitas vivendi licentiam dabat, illic alienigena vitam agebat."—*Ang. Sac.* ii. 91.

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longer required when, so far from expecting any fresh message, we are bound to reject it if proffered. Under the patriarchal dispensation, when the Scriptures did not exist, miracles were a necessity, if God were to make communications to our race, when our race, in the infancy of its existence, required supernatural enlightenment and direction. Mention is accordingly made frequently of the appearance of the Divine Angel, Jehovah, the Messenger, to the patriarchs.*

Under the Levitical dispensation the Scriptures existed, but not in their fulness: to add to the Scriptures, prophets were miraculously inspired, and by miracles gave proof of their inspiration. When Christianity was first introduced, miracles for the same reason were required, and as nothing ends abruptly we may believe that they were occasionally performed even after the apostolic age, until the Bible was received in its completeness by all the churches in the world. The curse of God now rests upon any one who shall add to those oracles of God, which have been committed to the custody of the Church; and with the *à priori* argument before me, I am prepared to endorse the opinion of a great philosopher and historian, who, after laying down the axiom that whosoever ascribes the order of nature to a Supreme mind, must believe it to be possible for that Mind to suspend and alter the course of events, proceeds to remark that there is probably no miracle of the middle ages which requires any other confutation than a simple statement of the imperfection and inadequacy of the testimony produced in its support.†

It may be said that an exception ought to be made when such an important event is in contemplation, as the intro-

* On this subject, see Archbishop Whately, "On Angels." The whole subject of mediæval miracles is treated in a liberal and candid spirit by Dr. Arnold, in his second Lecture on Modern History.

† Mackintosh, Hist. of England, i. 33: ed. Lond. 1830.

duction of Christianity into a heathen land, especially when, from the authentic accounts of modern missionaries, we learn that the Spirit of evil exercises, in heathen lands, an amount of power over external objects, of which we have no conception in these parts of the world, where the standard of the Cross has been planted. That such an interposition might have occurred, was, at one time, the opinion of the author, and it is an opinion which has received the sanction of no less a man than Edmund Burke.* But, called upon to examine the subject more closely, with respect to the introduction of Christianity among our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, we are met by these two facts: — First, that miracles are not performed by our numerous missionaries, now labouring in Asia, Africa, and America, although the same argument which would induce us to expect the performance of them when Augustine arrived in England, would conduce to the expectation of a similar gift at the present time. And, secondly, that while the performance of miracles is asserted in behalf of missionaries in the sixth and seventh centuries, there is a total silence in regard to *the* miracle, the only miracle which seemed really wanted, the miracle which was peculiar to the apostolic age, namely, the gift of tongues.

I am by no means inclined to regard every Thaumaturgus as an impostor; the credulity of the age had its influence upon him who regarded, as miraculous, an action performed by himself, because it happened to be beyond his expectation or design, not less than upon those who, in narrating, exaggerated the wonder, and were accustomed to see a Divine interposition in occurrences which we now know to be in accordance with the ordinary processes of nature. It is only in modern times that we have learned to distinguish between credulity and faith, and to

* Burke, v. 511, 4to. quoted by Mackintosh, i. 33.

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understand that, as the object to be reached in all our investigations is Truth, one inquirer may fall into as great error by believing too much, as another by believing too little. If Augustine, when his object was to arrive at Canterbury, had sailed past the coast of Kent and landed in Yorkshire, he would have found himself as far from the place of his destination as if he had stopped short of his journey and lingered in France. Because infidelity is a vice, it does not follow that superstition is a virtue. But before this principle was recognised, and when the only fear men had was lest they should not believe enough, they encouraged themselves in credulity; and whereas we should think it sinful to give credit to the report of a miracle without carefully examining the evidence, our conviction being that credulity weakens the cause of Christianity, the ancients were, on the contrary, too much inclined to regard an investigation of evidence, not as a legitimate exercise of the reason with which our Creator has endowed us, but as an indication of an infidel temper or a want of faith. In this respect, and in all that pertains to the formation of Christian temper and character, the Church, as we should expect, becomes more enlightened as the world advances in age, and the great end approaches. In these days the ordinary Christian, taught to use the world without abusing it; to blend the duties of a contemplative with those of an active life; to distinguish between self-discipline and asceticism; to aim at practical usefulness instead of a theoretical, unattainable perfection; to take lessons in heavenly love through the endearments of domestic life; to perceive how Christianity is intended, not to create angels, but to elevate human nature, training it for manly virtue; and to discriminate between true religion, based upon divine love and sound morality, and the sentimentality and mere romance of an enervating superstition, is superior to the greatest saints of the middle

age, to whom, at the same time, we tender the homage of a charitable respect, since they by their virtues, exhibited under more difficult circumstances, prepared the way for that better order of things which we are permitted to enjoy. If our successors, when they shall have raised the humbler classes of society to a fuller enjoyment of those advantages which are designed by a beneficent Creator for all, shall pay due honour to us who are labouring in the cause of social improvement and reform, we are ourselves to speak with respect of our ancestors who raised the serf to a freeman, and who won for the Church of Christ that position in the land which we (surrounded as we are by the godless and profane, attacked by the infidel, and undermined by ambitious hypocrisy) are bound to defend with weapons not carnal but spiritual, and to hand down unscathed to our posterity.

Owing to the accession of archbishops generally, at an age so much more advanced than that of hereditary monarchs, and consequently the frequent mutation of office, it has been thought expedient to assist the memory by dividing the history into books and chapters, the books embracing the larger, and the chapters the smaller, durations of time. By giving the *lives* of the archbishops, and not confining ourselves to an account of *their episcopal acts*, we are enabled to extend our inquiries into a large region of literature and theology, and to questions occasionally of political and of private life.

In the biography of men who have not inherited their office, but have risen to it, it frequently happens that the most important events in their lives occurred, not when they had attained greatness, but while they were struggling with the difficulties by overcoming which they became great. In our first book, however, it is impossible to supply much personal anecdote, or to separate the account of the archbishop from the general history

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of his times; but to compensate for this, since the centralisation of the Church was effected sooner than that of the State, it is hoped that a greater degree of interest may be imparted to Anglo-Saxon history than we are accustomed to feel, when the mind is compelled to wander from one kingdom of the Heptarchy to another*, and becomes wearied by a division of labour, notwithstanding the attempt of our historians to invest the office of Bretwalda with more of influence and importance than it really possessed.

Among the archbishops there are a few eminent men distinguished as much for their transcendent abilities as for their exalted station in society; but, as a general rule, they have not been men of the highest class of mind. In all ages the tendency has very properly been, whether by election or by nomination, to appoint "safe men," and as genius is generally innovating and often eccentric, the safe men are those who, with certain high qualifications, do not rise much above the intellectual average of their contemporaries. They are practical men rather than philosophers and theorists, and their impulse is not to perfection, but *quieta non movere*. From this very circumstance their history is the more instructive, and, if few among the archbishops have left the impress of their mind upon the age in which they lived, we may, in their biography, read the character of the times which they fairly represent. In a missionary age we find them zealous, but not enthusiastic; on the revival of learning, whether in Anglo-Saxon times or in the fifteenth century, they were men of learning, although only a few have been distinguished as authors. When the mind of the

* Although the term Heptarchy is not historically correct, yet I shall employ the word as one to which we have been long accustomed. It is pedantry to quarrel with language when it has become technical.

laity was devoted to the camp or the chase, and prelates were called to the administration of public affairs, they displayed the ordinary tact and diplomatic skill of professional statesmen, and the necessary acumen of judges; at the reformation, instead of being leaders, they were the cautious followers of bolder spirits; at the epoch of the Revolution, they were anti-Jacobites rather than Whigs; in a latitudinarian age they have been, if feeble as governors, bright examples of Christian moderation and charity.

CHAP. II.

THE ITALIAN MISSIONARIES.

Augustine.—See of Canterbury founded by Ethelbert.—Providential Preparations for Reception of the Gospel in England.—Gregory the Great.—Augustine's Mission.—Fears of the Missionaries.—Augustine's Arrival in Kent. —Reception by Ethelbert.—Entrance of Missionaries into Canterbury.—Domestic Policy of Augustine.—Library.—Wonderful Success.—Conversion of the King.—Baptism of Ten Thousand.—New Missionaries.—Consecration of Justus to Rochester, and Mellitus to London. — Liturgical Difficulties.—Consecration of Augustine.—Interview with British Bishops. —False Miracle. — Misconduct of Augustine.— Augustine's Elation of Mind rebuked by Gregory.—Pallium sent.—Questions proposed by Augustine to Gregory.—Death of Augustine. *Laurentius.*— His Consecration. —Letter to Celtic Bishops.—Consecration of Monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul (St. Augustine's).—Death of Ethelbert.—Difficulties of Subject of Marriage.—Persecution.—Cowardice of Laurentius and the Missionaries.—False Miracle. *Mellitus.*—His coming as a Missionary.—Bearer of Letter from Gregory to Augustine.—Becomes Bishop of London.—Consecration of Churches.—Visit to Rome.—Return to London.—Persecution. —Flight.—Residence in Canterbury.—Translated to the Archbishopric. —Effect of Prayer. *Justus.*—Foundation of the See of Rochester.—More Kings than one in Kent.—His Flight.—Translation to Canterbury.—Mission to Northumbria.—Archbishop Paulinus.—His Success. *Honorius.* Pupil of Gregory. — Gregorian Chants.— Consecrated by Paulinus. — Inefficiency of the Italian Missionaries. — Conversion of East Anglia.— Two Palls sent from Rome.—Defeat of Edwin.—Failure of Paulinus.— Birinus.—Aidan.—Celtic Missionaries. — Merits of the Italian Missionaries.*

AUGUSTINE.

CHAP. II. Augustine. 597.

THE see of Canterbury was founded in 597 by Ethelbert, king of Kent. The first archbishop was Augustine, whose name appears in history as the prior of St. Andrew's

* The authorities in addition to those to which references are made, are:—Bede, Eccl. Hist. lib. i. ii.; Goceiin, Vita, Miracula, De Transla-

monastery in Rome. He was sent by Gregory the Great, when Bishop of Rome, as a missionary to England, for the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons. His first success was so great, the kingdom of Kent with its king, amounting to more than ten thousand souls, having been converted within a year of his arrival, that it was regarded as miraculous by Augustine and his contemporaries.

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Although the piety of modern times recognises the doctrine of a special Providence, and sees in every event the finger of the Almighty, shaping all things to his own wise ends, and overruling the actions of men without interfering with the freedom of the agents; still, instead of considering revolutions such as we are about to describe, as if they were isolated facts of history, we are accustomed to look out for a long succession of predisposing and unnoticed causes, so that the event when it occurs is seen to be in conformity with the constituted order of things or the laws of nature.

The almost immediate conversion of the kingdom of Kent by the Italian missionaries might well fill the pious heart of Gregory with wonder, gratitude, and joy, and disturb the equilibrium of the weaker mind of Augustine; but if we have regard to the previous history and proceedings of the Saxons in England, we find that when the sower came forth to sow his seed, the soil was already prepared for its reception.

This is the more apparent when we bear in mind, that while the successful labours of the Italian missionaries

tione B. Augustini; Henschen, Acta SS. Maii, vol. vi.; Godwin, De Præsulibus; Anglia Sacra; Saxon Chronicle and Henry of Huntingdon in Mon. Hist. Brit.; Gervase of Canterbury and John Bromton in Twysden's Decem Scriptores; Spelman's Concilia; Ussher's Antiquitates Britt. Ecc.; Stillingfleet's Origines Britannicæ; Parker's Antiquitates Brit.; and the works of Gregory the Great, Benedictine edition.

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were almost confined to the kingdom of Kent, yet within the first fifty years of the following century, the Christian religion was established in all the kingdoms of the Heptarchy. The missionaries were independent of Augustine and the establishment at Canterbury, but their success in almost every instance was as sudden and rapid.

A conquered people naturally exaggerate both the power and the cruelty of the invaders of their land, and to inspire terror the invaders encourage the exaggeration. But after we have made every allowance for the pagan Saxons, we are obliged to admit that their barbarism was of a savage character, when they appeared first as the allies, and then as the oppressors of the Britons. We may always judge of an idolatrous nation by the character of the religion which their imagination has created, and by which their hopes and fears are excited. Woden, the tutelary deity of the Saxons, was the god of slaughter, and Frigga, his wife, was the goddess of sensuality. They looked indeed to a world beyond the grave; but the joys of their Valhalla were to consist of days of bloodshed and nights of debauchery. They imagined that when the struggle of the daily fight was over, their wounds being miraculously healed, they were to intoxicate themselves by draughts of mead quaffed from the skulls of their enemies. We can form no favourable opinion of a people, of whose religion the chief element was carnage, its morality a code of strife, its rewards plunder, while its very altars were stained by the blood of human victims. We can hardly feel surprised that the Britons, though admitting the duty of missionary exertion, regarded as hopeless the conversion of their enemies to the faith of Christ.

But the religion of a people only indicates the opinion of the majority. Amidst the gentle and purifying influences of Christianity, the numbers have always been

great of the profligate, of the profane, and even of the unbelieving; and under the worst systems of paganism, although by the training of an evil education and the absence of early discipline, the fiercer and viler passions may predominate and become uncontrollable as madness, still there must always have been in some minds a longing after better things; there are soft places in the hardest heart. When the various tribes which flowed into Britain from the banks of the Elbe had settled down into cultivators of the soil, there was an inclination to enjoy the arts of civilisation and peace, and the superstitions of a terrific mythology were gradually becoming effete. This revulsion in opinion and feeling, however, did not render them irreligious; for in Saxon paganism there was this peculiarity, that the simple patriarchal faith, which all nations at first possessed, was never lost, and when the idolatrous superstitions were removed there still remained a substratum of truth. The Saxons possessed a double creed, which, though flowing for a time in one channel, flowed like the waters of the Rhone and Arve in distinct and separable currents. The worship of Woden might be renounced by the Saxons without their sinking into atheism; for they had always believed in the existence of one Supreme Being, before whom Woden and the other gods and goddesses were to be prostrated: "the Author of everything that exists, the eternal, the living, the awful Being who never changes, who lives and governs during ages, and who directs everything that is high and everything that is low." *

The thoughtful believed in a heaven beyond the Valhalla; and they imagined, beyond the hell over which Hela presided, a lower deep, ever gaping to devour the very gods they worshipped. There were many among

* See Mallet's Northern Antiquities, ch. iv. v.

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them who could not force themselves into the opinion that lust and rapine were to be everlasting, although they were willing to defer the day of retribution to some period which was far removed from the day of their death.

At the same time it is to be remarked, that if the pagan Saxons persecuted the British Church, they were nevertheless wedded to British wives. They came as warriors; army after army arrived and settled in the land; but we do not read of their sending for their women. And, although, by the persecution of the Church, the women were deprived of the public exercise of their religion, still the softer training which they had received must have had a civilising influence upon their families; and this influence must have been the greater, since a respect for females and for conjugal virtue was one of the characteristics of the Teutonic races, even in their savage state.

Everything tended in the same direction. Nations, like individuals, dislike singularity. The Goths in Italy, Spain, and southern France were Christians. The Lombards and the Franks had been converted. Any tendency on the part of the Saxons to despise the religion of a people whom they had subdued, would be counteracted by the knowledge that the religion of the Britons was also the religion of the Romans, and the Romans were the objects of admiration and respect among the most hostile of the barbarian tribes. Roman forms of government were in vogue among the Saxons; and it is worthy of remark that the coin of Ethelbert, when Bretwalda, was an imitation of the Roman, having the impress of the wolf and twins. The Saxons in Britain were indeed surrounded by works which constantly reminded them of Roman grandeur. Towns, lighthouses, roads, and bridges of Roman workmanship existed in the time of Bede.*

Such a people were not unprepared to hear the preacher

* Bede, i. 11.

when he said, "Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."

There was a special preparation in the kingdom of Kent. Ethelbert, the king, a noble hearted, liberal minded, intelligent man, was married to a Christian princess, Bertha, the daughter of Charibert, king of Paris. It had been stipulated that she should enjoy the free exercise of her religion, and she came to England attended by her chaplain.

Liudhard * was a retired bishop, and receiving from the king an old Roman or British church, for the service of Queen Bertha, he consecrated it afresh, and named it after the French saint, St. Martin. One aged ecclesiastic could not do much in the way of conversion; but there was an eloquence in his consistent conduct which spoke to the hearts of men, while "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit" with which Bertha was adorned induced the royal household to think favourably of the religion of their queen.

Liudhard was not slow to perceive that the harvest was ready, if labourers could be found. We know that application for missionaries was made to the bishops of France; we may presume that it was made by Liudhard; but the application, by whomsoever made, received no attention, and the French bishops were reproached for their apathy by Gregory.† The same apathy however was found to exist when a similar application was made to the Roman Church. The only heart in which zeal for the extension of Christ's kingdom was at that time found, was the heart of Gregory himself.

* His bishopric was probably that of Senlis, although it is sometimes represented as Soissons. He died in the year that Augustine landed; and as he would not have retired from his see till late in life, the inference is that he came here an aged man.

† Greg. Mag. Epp. v. 58, 59.

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The story has often been repeated of the interview which took place between Gregory and three Yorkshire youths who, when Gregory held only a subordinate position in the Church, were exposed for sale in the slave-market of Rome; how he was struck with the open countenance and noble bearing of the lads; how he declared that the Angles should become angels; that the Deirans must be rescued *de irâ;* that the subjects of King Ella should be made to sing Alleluia.*

There is no reason to discredit this tradition of the Church of Canterbury, which has been handed down to us by Bede: there is, on the contrary, every reason to believe that under this pleasantry Gregory half concealed and half revealed, partly encouraged and partly checked, an incipient resolution to take more decided steps than had hitherto been taken for the conversion of the English. We find him soon after only prevented from conducting the mission in his own person by an uproar of the people, to whom his merits as a statesman were known. But we should be doing him great injustice if we were to represent the great statesman of the age as a mere enthusiast hurrying into an important action, from the impulses of a heated imagination and a momentary excitement. The sight which moved his compassion and roused his indignation in the slave-market, may have quickened his resolution, but the duty of establishing a mission to the English had long before attracted his attention and occupied his thoughts.†

And to the credit of Gregory it must be recorded that

* Gregory was an incorrigible punster: other puns of his are given in Stanley's "Memorials of Canterbury." Dr. Stanley's account of Augustine's landing in Kent, is written in the spirit of a poet, and with the accuracy of an historian.

† This is stated on the authority of Gregory's own letters, lib. v. 58, 59. They are printed at length in Wilkins' Conc. iv. 714.

the poor barbarians, in a remote corner of the earth, were not forgotten by him when, elevated to the see of Rome, this truly great man had to contend against difficulties before which an ordinary intellect and less moral courage would have quailed and retreated. When a plague was raging within the walls of the city, and famine was impending; when a schism disturbed the Church; when the Lombards threatened an attack on Rome; and the people, his *de facto* subjects, were calling upon him to enter into a treaty with the enemy that the safety of the Roman duchy might be secured; when the Emperor of the East, his *de jure* master, was requiring of him that he should not compromise the dignity of the Byzantine empire; and he had to adjust the machinery of a disorganised government to the exigencies of the times, such was the expansiveness of Gregory's mind and the largeness of his heart, that he never forgot the sad sight which had excited his compassion in the Roman Forum, never ceased to hear the appeal which had been made to him from Saxon Britain, "Come, and help us."

His first plan was to purchase English slaves in foreign markets, to emancipate and educate them, and then to employ them in the conversion of their countrymen. To what circumstance the failure of this wise measure is to be attributed, we do not know. All that we do know is that the measure finally adopted was that of organising a mission of Italians, whose leader was Augustine.*

In appointing his mission, Gregory was guilty of an error in judgment, attributable in part to the character of

* We are repeatedly warned by our missionary bishops at the present time, that they must have well-educated, as well as pious men, for missionaries, if we desire success. A few years ago the notion prevailed that any one would do for a missionary, provided that he was a man of piety.

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the man, and in part, to the spirit of the age. One of the errors of the age was an almost entire forgetfulness of the secondary causes employed in the providence of God; looking always to the First Great Cause, men expected a miraculous interference, and what they expected as a probability, they were eager to imagine as a fact. Gregory's notion was, that if he could secure men of vital religion and piety to undertake the mission, the work would be accomplished by the direct interposition of the Deity. The inconsistency is apparent, as it is always to be discovered where extreme views prevail. Either there ought to have been the employment of no human agency, and the whole work should have been a work of prayer; or else, if human agency were to be employed, the most efficient agents should have been selected. While all history speaks of the fervent piety, the self-denial, and consistent moral conduct of the forty missionaries who were sent from Rome, we do not discover amongst them a single man endowed with superior powers of mind, and we find them, in consequence, as a body, defective in moral courage.

Scriptural knowledge was the only knowledge which Gregory valued; and while the success of his missionaries is to be attributed in part to the circumstance of their being men mighty in the Scriptures, their failures may be traced to that want of general information which is especially observable in the history of Augustine.

At the very outset of the mission, Augustine gave evidence of his unfitness to discharge adequately the duties which devolved upon him in the responsible office of its leader. The little party traversed with speed the north of Italy, crossed the Gallic Alps, and arrived in safety in Provence. Here, probably in the neighbourhood of Aix or Lerins, their courage began to fail them. They were surprised to find an unkindly

spirit manifested by the French, and were still more surprised at finding the authority of the Bishop of Rome set at nought. To the position of the French Church, with reference to the see of Rome, we shall have occasion presently to revert; we have only here to observe that the missionaries, finding their difficulties and dangers to have commenced even in France, were thoroughly disheartened and alarmed. If Augustine's had been a master mind, he would have been able to dispel their fears, to raise their courage, and by reminding them that great men are made, not in the absence of difficulties, but in overcoming them, to have roused them to exertion, and have led them boldly on. But Augustine shared the fears of those whom he ought to have encouraged, and offered to use his influence with Gregory to release them from their vows, and to authorise the relinquishment of a mission which had now apparently become hopeless.

Augustine returned to Rome. He stood before one who, having manfully risen above difficulties to which the difficulties already encountered by the missionaries were as nothing, was unable to tender him sympathy, or even to understand his feelings. Gregory sent back Augustine to his timid companions, the bearer of the following very sensible letter: — "Gregory, the servant of the servants of God, to the servants of our Lord. Forasmuch as it were better not to begin a good work, than to think of desisting from that which has been begun, it behoves you, my beloved sons, to accomplish the good work which, by the help of our Lord, you have undertaken. Let not, therefore, the toil of the journey, nor the tongues of evil speaking men, deter you, but with all possible earnestness and zeal perform that which, by God's direction, you have undertaken, being assured that much labour is followed by greater eternal reward. When Augustine, your provost, returns (whom we have also constituted your abbot),

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humbly obey him in all things, knowing that whatsoever you shall do by his direction will, in all respects, be profitable to your souls. May Almighty God protect you with His grace, and grant that I may, in the heavenly country, see the fruits of your labour, inasmuch as though I cannot toil with you, I may partake in the joy of the reward, because I am willing to labour. God keep you in safety, my most beloved sons. Dated the 10th of the kalends of August (23rd of July, 596), in the fourteenth year of the reign of our pious and most august Lord, Mauritius Tiberius, the thirteenth year after the consulship of our said lord, in the fourteenth indiction."*

But Gregory, though firm, was always considerate and kind. He now provided Augustine and his companions with introductory letters to the kings and chief personages of France, and, with a wise inconsistency, directed that interpreters should be added to the missionary band.

Notwithstanding this precaution, the difficulties which Augustine had to encounter in his passage through France were so many and great, that it was supposed they could could only be surmounted by miracle, and miracles are accordingly enumerated, some of them possessing considerable poetical beauty, in the "Acta Sanctorum."

From Aix to Arles, from Arles to Vienne, and so on to Châlons, to Sens, and Tours, the missionaries slowly bent their steps, and descended to the coast through Anjou.† When they looked upon the billows of the British Channel, they regarded them as less inhospitable than the French, through whom they had fought their way, and felt their courage revive when their preacher repeated the words of our Lord: — "Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or

* Bede, i. 23.

† For Augustine's probable route, see Smith's Bede, App. vi.

children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit eternal life." *

CHAP. II.

Augustine. 597.

In the autumn of the year 596, Augustine, with his little missionary band, consisting partly of monks and partly of clergymen, arrived in England.

They landed in the Isle of Thanet, but whether at Ebbesfleet, or at the spot called Boarded Groin, or at Stonar, near Sandwich, or at Retesburgh, the local historians are unable to inform us. There they remained, in a state of anxiety greater than that which they had experienced in Provence, until the interpreters whom they had sent to King Ethelbert returned. All cause of fear, however, was removed by a message from the king, who acceded to their request that he would grant them an interview, and gave directions that, until the interview should take place, they should be hospitably entertained.

At length it was announced to Augustine that the king would receive the missionaries, but in the open air, not concealing his fears that otherwise recourse might be had to magical arts, and his judgment be unduly biassed.

A procession was formed. First appeared the commanding figure of Augustine, preceded by a verger carrying *a silver cross* †—such as from that day to this has been carried before the dignitaries of the Church in many of our cathedrals,—then was raised a painting on a board, most probably in oils ‡, representing the figure of our blessed Redeemer. The brethren followed in order. The choir was headed by Honorius §, the pupil of Gregory,

* Matt. xix. 29.

† The crucifix did not at this time exist. The earliest appearance of the crucifix is fixed by M. Raoul-Rochette at the close of the seventh century, almost contemporary with the Council of Constantinople. See Lord Lindsay, On Christian Art, i. 91.

‡ Poole, Eccles. Architecture.

§ In the life of Honorius the reader will see the reason why this post is assigned to him.

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assisted by the Deacon Jacob. The king was at length discovered, surrounded by his soldiers and wise men, seated under an ancient oak. Then the chant began. The little procession trod slowly on, while the choir chanted in unison one of those deeply solemn litanies, which Honorius had learned from Gregory, and which, heard for the first time by barbarous ears, arrested attention, while it must have awakened new sensibilities.

The king, with a courtesy which the Christian missionary might have done well on another occasion to have imitated, motioned to Augustine that the missionaries should be seated. Through his interpreters Augustine forthwith preached to the king and his councillors the word of life, "how the merciful Jesus, by his own passion, redeemed this guilty world, and opened to believing men an entrance into the kingdom of heaven."*

Everything leaves us with a favourable impression of the character of Ethelbert. His answer was politic, courteous, and liberal in the extreme. "Very fair," said he, "are the words you have uttered and the promises you make. But to us these things are new, and their full meaning I do not understand. I am by no means prepared to assent to proposals which imply the renunciation of customs to which, with the whole English race, I have hitherto adhered But you have come from far. You are strangers. And I clearly perceive that your sole wish and only object is to communicate to us what you believe to be good and true. You shall not be molested. You shall be hospitably entertained. We will make provision for your maintenance, and we do not prohibit you from uniting to your society any persons whom you may persuade to embrace your faith."

The missionaries who arrived full of fear, after the

* See Ælfric's Homily on S. Gregory: ed. Thorpe. ii. 129.

perils of their journey through France, were now permitted to refresh themselves, and to prepare for their future labours in that land which had been described to them as "the country of green hills and the island of honey." CHAP. II. Augustine. 597.

Notwithstanding the caution of Ethelbert's language, his own mind was probably already decided as to the course he would pursue. The liberty he conceded to others, of associating themselves with the missionaries, if persuaded of the truth of their doctrine, was a liberty in which he might himself indulge. But an Anglo-Saxon king was no despot. The national religion could not be changed without the advice of the Witenagemot and the consent of the people. He had, therefore, to proceed with caution to feel his way, and gradually to create a public opinion in favour of the missionaries.

The report of what had occurred was soon noised abroad, and the inhabitants of Canterbury were desirous of looking upon the strangers who represented a nation, of whom they had heard much and seen little. When there was no doubt that the missionaries would be well received by the people, permission was given them to approach the city. The Saxons gazed with admiration on the dark-haired swarthy man, who, "higher than any of his people from his shoulders and upwards," preceded by his silver cross, once more headed the procession. They looked with awe upon the picture of his King and Saviour represented as a man of sorrows, and wearing on his head a crown of thorns. Instead of the tumult and the noise to which they were accustomed when the great men of their country approached the Bretwalda, silence was now only broken by the Hosanna and Hallelujah of the little Christian choir as they swelled responsive to the intonations of Honorius. "For thy mercy's sake, O Lord, we pray thee turn away thine anger from

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this city, and from thy holy house, for we have sinned. Hallelujah."

Their first lodging was, according to Thorne, in the district which was afterwards formed into the parish of St. Alphege, at a place called Stable-gate, because they "stabled" there.* This giving no offence, they were permitted to take possession of St. Martin's church which had been consigned to the queen; and they entered it singing, "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." †

And now, having brought Augustine and his brother missionaries to Canterbury, I shall best consult the convenience of the reader by considering in distinct paragraphs: I. First, what I shall describe as the domestic policy of Augustine. II. Secondly, the circumstances relating to his consecration. III. Thirdly, his interviews with the Celtic bishops.

I. Of the domestic policy of Augustine we may speak generally in terms of approbation. His characteristics were piety, zeal, enthusiasm, and discretion.

He, together with the clergy associated with him, was indefatigable in preaching the Gospel, and from the specimen of Augustine's preaching preserved to us in Gocelin, we can easily understand how effective their exhortations must have been.

He preached the one God by whom are all things, and

* Roger de Wendover, i. 98. Stanley, 18, 20. Thorne, in Twysden, 1758.

† Is. xxvi. 1—4. The passage in Gocelinus is very striking: "Tali devotione proto-doctoribus et in fide Christi proto-patribus Angliæ metropolim suam cum triumphali crucis labore ingredientibus, 'Aperite portas,'" &c.—*Anglia Sacra*, ii. 60.

the Almighty Son of the Father, who so loved His creatures, that, without ceasing to be God, He became man also, that by His death He might give to our fallen race the power to become the children of God. He preached the Lord Jesus Christ, at whose birth a new star appeared; who trod the sea with his feet; at whose death the sun hid its shining; at whose burial and resurrection the earth first trembled and then reposed.* He preached the Lord Jesus Christ, who from the beginning of the world expected by patriarchs and foretold by prophets as the Son of God, was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary, who by signs and wonders proved Himself to be perfect God as well as perfect Man, and is now received by all the world as the only Saviour of all mankind. CHAP. II. Augustine. 597.

From love to Him, would the preacher say, whose love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, we come, that you may be partakers with us of His everlasting kingdom; that as we have but One Maker, so we may all have a common Redeemer and Saviour.

Their books were few—a Bible in two volumes, a Testament, a Psalter, an exposition of the Epistles and Gospels, and for lighter reading a book of martyrs, and some apocryphal lives of the apostles.† But when books were scarce the memory was much exercised: and we hear of persons who could repeat large portions of Scripture; few were they who did not know the psalms, so as to join in the service of the church. The readers were incessantly employed. In church, at meal times, early in the morning and late at night, the lector was at his post.

What had yet greater influence upon the people was

* "Cujus sepulturæ, et resurrectioni, omnis terra contremuit et acquievit."—*Anglia Sacra*, ii. 58.

† Bede, i. 25.

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the consistent conduct of the missionaries. They lived in primitive simplicity, and were perfectly contented with what was provided for them. The monks were engaged in praying or instructing the people in details of duty, while the clergy were occupied as we have already described.

On the 2nd of June, in the year of our Lord 597, being the feast of Whitsunday, Ethelbert, king of Kent, openly declared himself a Christian, and received the sacrament of baptism.* But he caused it to be known that he did not intend to compel others to follow his example; for he learned, says Bede, from his instructors, that the service of Christ ought to be voluntary, not by compulsion.

In the mean time the excitement throughout the little kingdom of Kent, if not throughout the Bretwalda's whole dominions, must have been great. Ten thousand Anglo-Saxons could not be contemplating the public renunciation of an old religion and the acceptance of a new one without much of discussion and turmoil.

When the passions, the desires, the expectations, the hopes, the fears of a mass of men, women, and children have been excited, and enthusiasm approaches the very verge of sanity, extraordinary things will occur, which will become more extraordinary still in the narration. Fact will be associated with fiction, and conclusions will be arrived at without consideration. Sensations will be mistaken for revelations. The cures of nervous disorders are frequent and often wonderful, and they are accounted miraculous. The diseased and the weak are excited into health and strength; even into shattered bones new vigour is infused. Both actors and relators easily persuade themselves that what they see, hear, and experience,

* Elmham: ed. Hardwick, 78. Bede, i. 26.

is really supernatural; or, if a doubt arise, it is immediately silenced as an indication of infidelity.

What happened among the Jansenists in France, what happened under the preaching of John Wesley in our own country, occurred when Christianity was first introduced among the Saxons, and in all such cases it is satisfactory to know that the hypocrites and impostors soon pass away, while the sincere, in the course of time, cool down into sobriety. But if we attribute to natural causes what Augustine and his followers regarded as indications of a supernatural intervention, we are prepared to admit their general honesty, and to believe that many strange things were both seen and done.*

About this time, probably, the witan assembled.† At the convention of the great authorities of the realm, *cum concilio sapientium*, the laws known as the Dooms of Ethelbert were enacted.‡ These laws recognise Christianity and the Christian priesthood, and the Church was established in the kingdom of Kent, although the idols and their temples were not destroyed. When Christianity had been

* The legendary account of miracles wrought at this time is the invention of a later age.

† Kemble, Saxons in England, ii. 205.

‡ Bede, ii. 5. Thorpe's Ancient Laws and Institutes, i. These are the first written laws of England. Lord Campbell, in his interesting "Lives of the Chancellors," attributes them to Angemundus, who is represented as the referendary or chancellor, the officer whose business it was to receive petitions and supplications addressed to the king, and to make out, as Custos Legis, writs and mandates. But the charters which contain the name of Angemundus, the referendary, are very apocryphal. See Cod. Dipl. i. Campbell surmises that Angemundus, if he existed, was one of the Italian missionaries, but he does not give any authority or assign his reason. It is more than questionable whether any Italian would have condescended to study the old traditional laws of the Anglo-Saxons, or whether the wise men of the Gemot would have permitted a foreigner, however respected he might be as an ecclesiastic, to become the Custos Legis.

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sanctioned by the king and the witan, the whole mass of the people rushed to the waters of baptism, accepting individually the religion which had been adopted by the nation in its corporate capacity. From Gregory's letter to the patriarch Eulogius, we learn that the baptism of the ten thousand took place on the 25th of December, 597.*

The baptism of ten thousand persons required an increase both of church accommodation and of clergy. The demand for new churches was generously met by the self-denying piety of King Ethelbert. In order to provide the missionaries with a fixed locality within the walls of the town, he gave up his palace in Canterbury to be a residence for Augustine. On the adjacent ground, on the site of an ancient Roman church, the foundation was laid of the cathedral: and the prejudices of the age being opposed to intramural interments, a cemetery was formed without the walls, where Ethelbert endowed a monastery, the foundation stone of which was laid by Augustine, who did not live however to see its completion. Its original title was the monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul, but a grateful posterity attached to it the name of Augustine; and, as the mission college of St. Augustine's, it is still a blessing to that Church, of which, under God, Augustine was the founder. The king also assigned to the archbishop another Roman building, which had hitherto been desecrated to the profanations of pagan worship. This church Augustine consecrated under the title of St. Pancras, a title which induces us to suppose that it contained a school for the instruction of the young.†

* Greg. M. Epp. vii. 30.

† Bede, i. 33. Elmham, 78, 79, 82. Pancratius, or St. Pancras, was a boy who suffered martyrdom in the reign of Diocletian, and Gregory was celebrated among his other virtues for his attention to the education of youth. His missionaries were the founders of the first national school.

For a supply of clergymen Augustine applied to Gregory, and in 601 other missionaries made their appearance, the bearers of valuable gifts; altar cloths and vestments for the new cathedral, relics, and, more valuable than all, books. Of the books it is said that two manuscript Gospels still exist, one at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and the other at the Bodleian.* Augustine. 601.

The new missionaries enabled Augustine to extend his operations. As all Kent was converted, a church was required at Rochester, and a see being established there, Justus was consecrated the first bishop.

About the same time the intelligence reached Augustine that Sebert, king of Essex, was desirous of instituting a mission in his kingdom. Sebert was King Ethelbert's nephew, and the nephew was prepared to follow his uncle's example. Augustine, responding to the call, sent to him Mellitus and some other missionaries, whose success was nearly as speedy, though not so lasting, as that of Augustine. Mellitus was consecrated Bishop of London, and restored the churches of St. Paul's and Westminster†, which had been formerly consecrated by the Celtic bishops, and on the locality of which had stood, in all probability, heathen temples from time immemorial.

But in the midst of his unexpected success, Augustine was not without his difficulties. There were in the primitive Church four principal liturgies, claiming a common origin. The great Oriental liturgy, which prevailed in the churches from the Euphrates to the Hellespont, and thence to the southern extremities of Greece, referable to

* More particular reference to these books will be given in the Life of Theodorus. The arguments for their genuineness are stated by Wanley, in Hickes' Thesaurus, ii. 172, 173.

† This foundation of Westminster is traditional only. Ailred, in Twysden, 385.

CHAP. II. Augustine. 604.

St. James as its author; the Alexandrian, the liturgy of Egypt, Abyssinia, and north-eastern Africa, traced to St. Mark; the Roman, used throughout Italy, Sicily, and proconsular Africa, claiming the authority of St. Peter; and the Gallican, derived probably from Ephesus and St. John, which was the liturgy of Gaul, Spain, and Britain. The Gallican liturgy was that according to which the services were conducted in the queen's church of St. Martin's, Canterbury. As it differed from the Roman *, the observance of it was perhaps distasteful to Augustine, who was narrow-minded and sectarian. But the queen was not to be offended; and the Gallican liturgy could not be suppressed without creating a controversy in the infant church. Augustine consulted Gregory, and Gregory, with an enlarged view of the circumstances of the case, advised the new archbishop, in arranging the services of the English Church, not to tie himself down to the Roman ritual, or to the Gallican, or to any other, but to select out of every church what is pious, religious, and right, and so to form a new liturgy for the Church of England, "an English one," for, alluding to Augustine's too narrow attachment to everything Italian, he observes: — "Things are not to be valued on account of places, but places for the good things they contain."†

II. In the mean time Augustine had sought and obtained

* The precise nature of this difference was not ascertained until Bona and Thomasius discovered and published some ancient monuments of the Gallican liturgy. To the learned Mabillon we are indebted for a valuable commentary and observations upon these remains; and at a later period, Martene published an ancient treatise upon the Gallican liturgy, professing to be written by Germanus, bishop of Paris, in the sixth century, which materially elucidates the subject. Palmer, Origines Liturgicæ, i. 143: ed. 1845.

† Bede, i. 27.

consecration to the episcopal office at the hands of the Archbishop of Arles.* CHAP. II. Augustine. 597.

It appears at first sight strange that, knowing the perils of a journey in France, Augustine should have travelled so far to obtain what might have been conceded to him nearer home. There were obvious reasons for his not applying to the Celtic bishops, and as regards the Gallican bishops, there were difficulties, since Augustine was a missionary from Rome, and was proud of his connection with that see, a connection which he was determined to maintain. The only one of the French metropolitans who was in direct communion with Gregory was Vergilius, Archbishop of Arles.

The whole state of affairs was perplexing to the mind of Augustine. On the one hand, the Frankish clergy maintained their independence, while yet, on the other hand, they were ready, if disputes arose, to appeal to the Bishop of Rome, upon the ground of his having an appellate jurisdiction under the conditions stated in the preceding chapter, to which the reader is referred.

Although Gregory was not a man to recede from any rights which he imagined to belong to his see, yet we know from his history that he had no desire to usurp powers beyond those which had been conceded to him as the Patriarch of the West. It is well known that in his controversy with John the Faster he denounced as heretical and anti-Christian the title of Universal Bishop. He repudiated, upon more occasions than one, a title which seemed injurious to his colleagues. As Neander observes, he was so far from denying the independence of other bishops, and from being willing "to interfere with it, that

* Wharton, Ang. Sac. i. 89, asserts that in making this statement, Bede is in error; but the correctness of Bede's statement is clearly established by Lingard, i. 336.

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when Eulogius, bishop of Alexandria, as was common with the Greeks, employed in one of his letters to Gregory the term, "as you commanded," Gregory prayed him always to avoid such expressions, "for I know who I am, and who you are. According to rank, you are my brother; according to piety, you are my father. I have not commanded you, but only sought to explain to you what seems to me to be profitable." *

But having an appellate jurisdiction in the West, the bishops of Rome, with a view to the public convenience, constituted certain metropolitans in distant churches to act as their representatives and to settle the disputes on the spot. This authority Gregory indicated by transmitting to the metropolitan, willing to accept the office, a Roman pallium.†

* Neander, v. 148.

† The metropolitans of France wore a pallium, but not the Roman; it was called the Gallican pallium. De Marca, lib. vi. c. 7, 31.

"The property of the Roman See, which had come to be designated as the 'patrimony of St. Peter,' included estates not only in Italy and the adjacent islands, but in Gaul, Illyria, Dalmatia, Africa, and even in Asia. These estates were managed by commissioners chosen from the orders of deacons and sub-deacons, or by laymen who had the titles of *Defensors*. By agents of this class Gregory carried on much of the administration of his own patriarchate, and of his communications with other churches; and, in addition to these, he was represented by *vicars*, bishops on whom, either for the eminence of their sees or for their personal merits, he bestowed certain prerogatives and jurisdiction, of which the *pall* was the badge. His more especial care was limited to the "suburbicarian" provinces, and beyond these he did not venture to interfere in the internal concerns of churches. In Gaul and in Spain he had vicars; his superintendence over the churches of these countries was undefined, and was chiefly exercised in the shape of exhortations to their sovereigns; but he succeeded in establishing by this means a closer connection with the Frankish kingdom than that which had before existed; and by thus strengthening his interest in the West, he provided for his church a support independent of the power of Constantinople." —*Robertson, Hist. Christ. Ch.* ii. 7.

These observations have been rendered necessary, not only to account for the conduct of Augustine in applying to Vergilius, bishop of Arles for his consecration, but also to enable us to understand a question which he put to Gregory, and which would, otherwise, be unintelligible. The question alluded to was this: "How are we to deal with the bishops of France and Britain?" The bishops of France (alluding, of course, to the northern provinces only), and the bishops of Britain are here placed in the same category. After his consecration, Augustine received from his friend what he regarded as a high distinction, the Roman pallium. He was thus to be Gregory's representative. How was he as such to comport himself? Gregory directed him to confine himself entirely to England, and gave him all the authority it was in his power to confer over the bishops holding sway in the British islands. But from what has just been advanced, we infer that his intention was that Augustine, while assuming the authority of metropolitan over the sees established by his missionary labours among the Saxons, was to act, as regarded the British bishops beyond the Saxon pale, as referee, when in their controversies they desired an arbitration. He, no doubt, expected that they would be deeply impressed with the honour of having among them a prelate, invested with the Roman pallium, and that they would place themselves with reference to him in the position of suffragans towards their metropolitans; but his course would have been not to coerce but to persuade them.

III. Unfortunately for the peace of the Church, Augustine could not properly appreciate or understand the policy or the principle of Gregory. Being now, as he supposed, invested with the full authority of a metropolitan, he determined to call upon the British bishops to acknowledge him in that character and to submit to his authority.

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He had sufficient sagacity to perceive that some concessions must be made, in order to make cordial the union between the ancient British and the new Saxon Church, but he wanted the tact to make his proposed concessions acceptable.

The influence of Ethelbert, as Bretwalda, was great. Even the Britons would respect him as the most powerful sovereign in the island, and their knowledge of his conversion rendered them the more willing to assent to his wishes, when he proposed to them that they should meet his bishop in conference.

Both parties were aware that the object of the projected conference was to decide, whether the two branches of the Holy Catholic Church now existing in the land, should unite under one head, that head being the Archbishop at Canterbury.

Augustine, in unconscious pride and imaginary humility, thought that he was stooping to an act of condescension in asking as a concession, that the British bishops should submit to what he supposed he had a right to demand.

Very different were the feelings of the British bishops themselves. They had no notion of being treated with condescension by one who was only their equal. The British Church was no doubt under circumstances of deep depression, as we shall presently state more fully; but the British Church was a section of that great Celtic Church which, both in Ireland and in the northern parts of Britain, was celebrated not only for the cultivation of biblical literature, but also for its missionary schools.

While Gregory was deploring the want of missionary zeal in France and Italy, and was with difficulty organising a mission to the Saxons, a missionary station (A.D. 565) had been already formed in Iona, whence Columba and his disciples were diffusing the blessings of Christianity over the dark corners of the Highlands and the Western

Islands, being destined at no distant period to succeed as missionaries in those northern counties in England, where the Italians, in a marked manner, failed.

Such were the parties which met at Augustine's oak*; Augustine and his Italians on the one side, the representatives of the Celtic Church on the other. Augustine called upon them to unite with him in the conversion of the heathen. This was a duty admitted by all.† And then, assuming without proof that he was right and that they were wrong, he demanded, as the condition of such fellowship, the surrender of certain principles, and the renunciation of certain practices, which were the peculiarities of the Celtic churches, and which, as marks of their independence, were peculiarly dear to them. Without attempting to prove it, for example, he declared that they kept Easter on the wrong day, and required an alteration in the observance. This treatment was more than flesh and blood could bear. The British bishops were inflexible. Augustine remonstrated, exhorted, grew angry, and dared to rebuke them. In the midst of his increpations he suddenly stopped. What then ensued shall be narrated in the words of Bede. "To put an end to this long and troublesome dispute he said: — Let us pray to God who

* It is remarkable that the exact place and the precise time of this very memorable conference is not known. It probably took place at Austcliffe in Gloucestershire, the usual ferry across the Severn. Ussher refers it to 602.

† The British Church has been unjustly censured by the Saxon chroniclers for not having attempted the conversion of the Pagan Saxons: this has been repeated by modern writers. What is stated above, however, shows, and the whole history of the Celtic Church confirms the fact, that the Celtic Church was eminently a missionary church. What rendered the Italian mission necessary was the unwillingness of the Saxons to hear the despised and persecuted Britons. When once the Saxons would hear them, the Celtic missionaries became more zealous than the Italian.

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hath made men to be of one mind in their Father's house, that He vouchsafe to signify unto us, by signs from heaven, which tradition is to be followed, and what are the means by which an entrance into His heavenly kingdom is to be administered. Let some sick person be produced, and let the faith and the ordinances be followed of that man in answer to whose prayer he shall be healed. The adversaries demurred to the proposal; but they at length gave an unwilling consent. A blind man, *an Anglo-Saxon*, was produced. He was presented to the British bishops, who prayed in vain. Augustine then, forced by the necessity of the case, bent his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying that by the bodily illumination of one man the grace of spiritual light might be kindled in many hearts, and make them believers. Immediately the blind man received his sight."*

This is the statement made by Bede, and copied nearly verbatim by succeeding chroniclers. In justice to the memory of Augustine I venture to say, that I do not believe that any such transaction took place. That Bede related faithfully the tradition of the Church of Canterbury no one doubts; but the event recorded took place some time between the years 600 and 605. Bede, we know, finished his history in 731. More than a century, therefore, elapsed between the alleged event and the first written record of it. If we read his narrative attentively, the account of the miracle looks like an interpolation. The whole action terminates with the determination of the British bishops, the anger of Augustine, his *increpationes*, when suddenly, without any reason assigned, Augustine becomes collected and calm. He deliberately, according to a plan pre-arranged, works his miracle. And what is the effect produced? Bede does indeed say that the

* Bede, ii. 2.

Britons confessed that it was the true way of righteousness which Augustine taught; but the statement is contradicted by the fact that he does not name a single Briton who became a convert to Augustine's opinion. No Briton invited his countrymen to change the customs of their country on the ground of the miracle. All that we know is, that a second conference was decided upon and was held. At that conference the Britons one and all determined to adhere to their own traditions. Is it not strange, if the miracle had been wrought, that by neither party any allusion should have been made to it? Surely, if a miracle had been wrought, Augustine would have been eloquent on an argument so powerful, and the British Christians, if the miracle was admitted, would have had nothing to plead for what would, in that case, have been mere perverseness and obstinacy.

For my own part, I treat the whole statement as a mere "Canterbury tale." But each reader will form his own opinion, and decide for himself. I will only add, that if observing a pre-arrangement, as is evident in Bede's narration, and the suspicious circumstances that the person operated upon, as admitted by his candour, was an Anglo-Saxon, the reader accepts the statement, but suspects collusion, even then while we condemn the whole proceeding as iniquitous, there is something to be said in Augustine's behalf. He despised his opponents, and regarded them as barbarians more barbarous than the Saxons; and we are not to forget that travellers in the present day have overawed savage tribes, and have prevented them from touching their firearms, by representing them to be living instruments of magic; that they have impressed them more than once with the idea of their being possessed of prophetic power by foretelling an eclipse; and that an officer of the British army, justly advanced to the highest honours of his profession, sought to compel the Caffres to

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submission by electric explosions, which he represented to be a miracle. This is not said with any intention to avert the condemnation to be pronounced upon a bad action, but merely to mitigate the severity of censure, when incurred by a man who is remarkable for his many virtues, and who did, in a dark age, what has been done under another form, in our own more enlightened times.

Without accusing Augustine of imposture, we find quite enough to censure in his conduct throughout this negotiation with the Britons.

A second conference having been resolved upon, both parties were occupied in deciding upon the plan of action.

The Italians were utterly unable to perceive the real point at issue. Proud in their own conceit, they regarded themselves as offering a boon to the British bishops which it was folly in them to reject; and at the same time, in their charitable wish, both to make peace, through religion, between the Britons and the Saxons, and to make their mission more effective, they determined to reduce their demands of concession to the minimum point, and to explain them more fully.

It was determined that the archbishop should state to them that he would accept them as his suffragans, notwithstanding their deviations from the customs of Augustine, and, as he added, of the universal Church, provided they would observe Easter according to the Roman computation, adopt the Roman form of completing baptism*, and unite with them in evangelising the Saxons. The

* Among the demands of Augustine one was: "Ut ministerium baptizandi, quo Deo renascimur, juxta morem sanctæ Romanæ et apostolicæ ecclesiæ compleatis." The complementum baptismi was confirmation (v. Hooker, E. P. v. lxvi. 6), and the Roman ritual required that when baptism was administered on the eves of the greater festivals, the baptized persons should be led from the font to the bishop to be confirmed. This is Dr. Lingard's explanation, but nothing is really known of this matter in dispute. Lingard, Ang.-Sax. Ch. i. 63.

last term of agreement was evidently adopted to insinuate a charge against the British Church, if they rejected the proposals, of preferring ceremonies comparatively unimportant to an evident Christian duty. CHAP. II. Augustine. 601.

There was also a preliminary meeting of the British bishops. The bishoprics regularly established in Wales were five: Menevia or St. David's, Llandaff, Llanbadarn, Bangor, and St. Asaph: to these may be added Gloucester, where, according to the Welsh genealogies, a British bishop resided about this time.* The seventh (for Bede mentions seven bishops, though he does not specify the sees) must be left to conjecture; but the bishop probably came from Cornwall. The seven bishops associated with them many very learned men from the monastery of Bangor†, with Dinoot, their president. They discussed their principle of proceeding at the abode of a certain anchorite, who was as much celebrated for his discretion as for his piety, and his reputation is confirmed by the advice which he gave, and upon which the bishops and learned men among the Britons determined to act. It was admitted, that to conduct the mission to the Saxons with effect, there ought to be unity of action, and that to produce unity of action it was desirable to appoint a metropolitan. The inferences suggested by the Welsh records are, that the archiepiscopal dignity at one time assumed by the prelates of Caerleon and Menevia had become extinct, if indeed it had ever been firmly established.‡ The real question was, then, as we stated

* Messrs. Freeman and Jones, the learned historians of Saint David's, mention as possible, Margam and Llanafan-fawr. Hist. and Antiq. of S. David's, 266.

† Ban-gor, the sacred circle. There were no less than sixteen places so name in Wales. This is supposed to be Bangor Iscoed, in Flintshire. Rees' Welsh Saints, 293. Writers differ considerably with respect to the names and titles of these seven bishops. They are compared with each other in Spelman's "Concilia" and Ussher, c. 5.

‡ Rees' Welsh Saints, 291

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before, and as the Britons clearly understood, whether the metropolitan power should be conceded to Augustine. His insolence at the former meeting was that of which those who had attended it complained.

The anchorite advised them to accept Augustine as their metropolitan, if he were a man of God. "But how are we to know that he is a man of God?" "The Lord," continued the anchorite, "hath said: 'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart.' If Augustine be meek and lowly of heart, he bears the yoke of Christ, and the yoke of Christ is all that he will seek to lay on you. But if, instead of being meek, he is a proud, haughty man, it is clear that he is not of God, and his proposals may be rejected by us." On further consultation, it was determined to put him to the test. It was to be so arranged as to permit Augustine and his little party to arrive first at the place of meeting; then the seven British bishops, with Dinost and their men of learning were, in an imposing procession, to draw near. "If Augustine," said the anchorite, "shall rise up to meet you as you draw near to him, then accede to his proposals, and accept him for your leader; but if he shall treat you with contempt, and not rise to meet you,—let him be by us contemned."

They came,—Augustine was seated, and the British prelates were permitted to enter the place of conference, not as if they were equals, but as if they were inferiors summoned into the presence of one who had a right to lay down the law. They were justly indignant. They would concede nothing. They positively refused to receive Augustine as their metropolitan. They assigned their reason:—If, while they were equals, he would not treat them with respect, what were they to expect if they elected him their superior and took the vow of canonical obedience. Augustine again lost his temper. He had

wished by the junction of the two churches to reconcile the two races between whom there was a deadly feud. To this his angry speech alludes:—he tells them that because they would not accept peace from men who would remain their enemies; because they would not preach the way of life to Anglo-Saxons; the Anglo-Saxons, instruments of the divine vengeance, would become to them the ministers of death.

Here, again, in the commonplace expression of an old man's impotent rage, Bede and his followers see a miracle and read a prophecy. Because, some years after, a pagan king slaughtered some monks of Bangor, Bede declared Augustine to be a prophet. And less charitable moderns are only prevented by the invincible difficulties of chronology from representing him as a fiend in human shape, urging on a pagan prince to deeds of blood in order that his prediction might be verified.

He was neither a prophet nor a fiend,—though he acted on this occasion without judgment or temper, and we shall dismiss this part of his history with a single reflection: Happy is the public character who has never been hurried by party feeling into violence which he has afterwards regretted; and happier still the man who has never damaged himself and a sacred cause by giving way to the ebullitions of temper.

Augustine now returned to Canterbury, where he was enabled to pursue for the short remainder of his life the even tenor of his way, in a sphere more suited to his temper, his capacity, and his many virtues. When we have recorded his errors, we must not forget that he was revered and beloved by his contemporaries, and that his memory was cherished long after his death. He was not perhaps aware of his weakness until he was tried; and it is not unusual to find the same man who is affectionately deferential towards his acknowledged superiors, courteous

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to his equals, kind to his friends, and considerate towards his dependants; at the same time haughty towards those who refuse to him the respect which he thinks to be due to himself, and violent under circumstances of opposition.

From Gregory he still continued to receive assistance and advice, and to that eminent man the faults of Augustine gradually revealed themselves.

In sending to Gregory an account of his missionary success, Augustine exhibited an elation of mind which brought to him a letter of brotherly and friendly warning from his distinguished friend. It would have been contrary to the spirit of the age for Gregory to have entertained a doubt as to the reality of the miracles which were reported to have had a great effect upon the people*; but without questioning the fact, Gregory warned his "most loving brother" to rejoice with fear, and to be carefully on his guard lest his mind should be puffed up; and when he was raised by divine Providence to a post of honour, lest he should become full of vain-glory. He reminded his correspondent that, although it were lawful to rejoice that, by wonders from without, the souls of many among the English were moved, so that they were sanctified by inward grace; yet, when the disciples of our Lord returned with joy to their heavenly master, and said, Lord, in thy

* I have seen letters published, and have read the report of speeches made by prelates of the present day, in which the truth of the spiritual miracles alleged to be performed at the present time in Ireland are fully admitted; whether a miracle be performed on the bodies of men or on the souls of men, in the kingdom of nature or the kingdom of grace, the assertion of miraculous interposition is the same, although the self-deception may be easier in the one case than in the other. I pass no judgment upon either the modern or the ancient prelates who admit the facts without question. I only allude to the circumstance to show that we are not the persons to think scorn of Gregory for his credulity.

name the very devils are subject to us, our Lord's answer was, Rejoice not for this, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven. He concluded by exhorting him to the strictest self-examination. "And if," he said, "you find that at any time you have offended your Creator by word or by deed, be sure that you call the offence continually to mind, that the remembrance of your guilt may crush any vanity which may arise in your heart."*

So, also, when Gregory thought to confer honour on the successful missionary by sending to him the pallium, he evidently perceived the tendency to pomp and vain-glory in his friend, and warned him that the pallium was only to be worn in the ministrations of the Church, and not on great state occasions, when it might appear to rival in splendour the royal garments.

Certain questions were forwarded by Augustine to Gregory, some of which indicate a simplicity of mind which fills us with astonishment.

For example, when preparing for the discharge of his metropolitan duties, he propounds the question, how ought bishops to deal with their clergy, and how should the oblations which the faithful bring to the altar be divided? A question which one would think, if he were fit for the episcopal office, he might have decided for himself. Gregory refers him to Scripture in general, and to the Epistles to Timothy in particular, for an answer to the first part of his query; and in relation to the second, he mentions that the custom of the Bishop of Rome was to advise bishops, on their consecration, to divide the income of the Church into four portions: the first for the maintenance of the bishop and his family, with a special view to hospitality, which is an episcopal duty; the

* Bede, i. 31.

CHAP. II. Augustine. 601.

second, to be divided among the other clergy; the third, to sustain the poor; and the fourth, for reparation of the churches. But although this was the general rule for the bishops, he reminded Augustine that, since he was a monk, he would not require a separate establishment, and had better live in common with his brethren. Here he seems again to glance at Augustine's love of personal display.

Although Gregory evidently thought that in a missionary church, the missionaries had better have all things in common, as at the first preaching of the gospel in Jerusalem, yet, as many among the inferior clergy were married, he advised that they should receive a separate dividend.*

Another question Augustine asked, is so puerile, that it is hardly possible to surmise his object. How ought he to be punished who steals anything out of a church? Gregory's answer evinces the kind and charitable temper of that great man: having intimated his surprise at the question, he observes that the nature of the sin is in some degree qualified by the motive and temptation to commit it, and that the measure of the punishment should always be dictated by charity, in order that the culprit may not be driven to despair. "But you will ask me," he says in conclusion, "how is he who has stolen from a church to make restitution? I answer, God forbid that the church should seek interest from losses, or make gain by the follies of men."

A practical difficulty had occurred to Augustine, and Gregory's solution of it is of some interest to an ecclesiastic. If bishops cannot easily assemble, by reason of their distance and long journeys, Augustine inquired whether a bishop might not be ordained without the

* Bede, i. 27.; Spelman, i. 95; Wilkins, i. 19.

presence of other bishops? The answer was in the affirmative, in an extreme case, such as Augustine's was before the consecration of Justus and Mellitus; but he advised him, whenever it was possible, so to arrange a consecration that three or four bishops might be able to attend: for, he observes, "in the regulation of spiritual affairs, we may take our example from things carnal: as married persons are invited to a marriage festival, to share in the rejoicings of those who are about to enter on a married life; so ought the bishops to meet together at that sacred mystery in which a man is married to God, to rejoice in his advancement, and to pray for his safety."

There are other questions which relate to the duties of a pastor and spiritual adviser, which were put by Augustine to Gregory, but which cannot be introduced into these pages with any advantage to the reader. They are questions which if brought under discussion in the present age, would be justly regarded as disgusting and offensive. They show the coarseness of mind which prevailed among the Pagans, and the difficulties which the converted had to encounter in overcoming the impurities of their education. The gentleness, the moderation and good sense of Gregory are conspicuous in his answers; and although the inquisition into each man's conscience, and the strict investigation of his moral conduct would be in these days both mischievous and intolerable, as interfering with the self-reliance of the individual, we are by no means prepared to say that it may not have been necessary in a semi-barbarous age, and among a semi-barbarous people, hitherto unaccustomed to anything which approached to moral restraint or self-control.

The events of Augustine's life, so far as they have been recorded, and after winnowing the truth from a large mass of fable, have now been told. The account of his

CHAP. II. Augustine. 604.

having visited the north of England is merely legendary; it rests on no producible evidence, and scarcely pretends to be more than a romance. Whatever may have been his weaknesses or his failures, Augustine was permitted to accomplish a great work, which will appear the greater when we remember that what he accomplished was all accomplished within the short space of ten years. The energetic mind and sanguine temperament of Gregory had contemplated the conversion of all England, and the establishment of two metropolitans, with twenty-four suffragans. The success of Augustine was confined to the kingdoms of Kent and Essex, and the Archbishop of Canterbury had only two suffragans, the bishops of London and Rochester. But we generally perceive that those only accomplish great things who aim at more than they have the ability or time to effect. To have converted more than ten thousand persons to the acceptance of Christianity, and to have been instrumental in bringing vital Christianity home to the hearts of Ethelbert and others such as he, is praise sufficient for an ordinary man, even when placed under extraordinary circumstances.

Around the death-bed of Augustine knelt not only the missionaries who had shared his fears, his hardships and his joys, but that good king who was equally concerned with Augustine in laying the foundations of the Church of England, and to each he delivered some little keepsake as a token of his affection. Augustine died with benedictions and exhortations on his lips, and, amid the bright foretaste of his own approaching blessedness, we can easily imagine the hope which thrilled his heart with respect to the future of his Church.*

* There is some doubt as to the precise time of his death. The Canterbury historians are unanimous in the tradition that he survived Gregory the Great two months, and taking the date from Bede fix

He was buried near the unfinished church of St. Peter and St. Paul, in the ground now said to be occupied by the Kent and Canterbury Hospital. CHAP. II. Laurentius. 604.

When the church, of which he had laid the foundation, was consecrated by his successor, his body was removed to the north porch.[9] There was a further translation of his bones, of which we have a minute description, but this belongs to a later age.

LAURENTIUS.*

The last important action of Augustine's life was to nominate, appoint, and consecrate his successor. He acted with the advice and sanction of the king, and his conduct is perfectly justifiable by the circumstances under which he was placed, although the proceeding was irregular.

His object was to prevent jealousies, and the various inconveniences which might arise in a church as yet unsettled, if an election had ensued; and it is creditable to Augustine that, being himself a monk, he chose as his successor one of the secular clergy. It was a time for action, and he selected a practical man. That his conduct was canvassed, and in some quarters censured, is apparent from the fact that Bede finds it necessary to provide us with an apology. The nature of the apology is charac-

both in 605. But Gregory really died in 604, and so according to Florence of Worcester did Augustine. Wharton's arguments are almost convincing. Unfortunately the evidence of the charters is wavering and suspicious.

* The following are the authorities for this life in addition to those to which special reference is made:—Ang. Sac.; Bede; Florence of Worcester; Birchington; Elmham.

CHAP. II.

Laurentius. 604.

teristic of the man and of the age. A statement is made, which has no foundation in history, and which, if true, would be insufficient to justify the proceeding, were any justification necessary beyond that which is afforded by the exigency of the times. He asserts that Augustine followed the example of St. Peter, who, it is said, having founded the Church of Christ in Rome, constituted Clement to be his assistant in preaching the Gospel, and at the same time nominated him as his successor.

Laurentius was one of the missionaries who had been with Augustine from the beginning, in whom he placed entire confidence, and whom he regarded as his friend. He was selected by the archbishop to announce his consecration to Gregory, to convey to him the intelligence of the first successes of the mission, and to seek an answer to those queries to which reference has been already made. He was called Laurentius the Presbyter, being thus distinguished as the representative of the clergy from Peter, styled the monk, by whom he was accompanied.*

When Laurentius succeeded to the see of Canterbury, and became sole bishop on the death of Augustine, we are informed, and we are ready to believe, that he laboured indefatigably, both by fervent preaching, and by the example of a consistent life, to raise to its requisite perfection the church of which the foundation was already laid: but he was soon made sensible of the damage which had been done to the cause he had at heart, by the arrogance and indiscretion of his predecessor. The churches of Ireland and of Gaul also, so far as the influence of Columbanus extended, made common cause with the Church of the Britons, and so resented the insults offered to the whole Celtic Church in the persons of the British bishops, that when Bishop Dagan was in Canterbury he refused

* Bede, i. 27.

not only to hold communion with the Italian missionaries in their public services, but to make his indignation more marked, he declined to eat with them in private, or to accept their hospitality.

Laurentius had become aware not only that the British Church was identical with the Scotch or Irish Church *, but that this church, which, for the sake of convenience I have denominated, and shall continue to denominate, the Celtic Church, was intimately connected with the churches of Gaul, from which indeed it had derived its Christianity.

The churches of Gaul were originally planted by missionaries †, not from Rome, but from the East; and hence, according to what has been stated under the life of Augustine, the ritualistic peculiarities arose which gave such offence to the Canterbury mission. Laurentius acted with discretion and in a Christian temper. He desired union, and he had recourse to the arts of conciliation. Another conference he could not expect, and he did not presume to dictate to those who, not having accepted him as their metropolitan, would have resented any assumption of power on his part. He determined to issue a pastoral letter, not in his own name, but in the name of the Canterbury mission. It was of an apologetic character; and he tried very skilfully to make it appear that he was himself the party injured, while he would fain make a distinction between the Scottish or Irish and the British

* The Scots were originally natives of Ireland. By the Scots, the Picts, who inhabited the northern part of our island, were subdued, and the conquerors gave to that portion of our country the name of Scotland. In the early part of Anglo-Saxon history, the Scotch and Irish are almost convertible terms.

† The most eminent among these was Irenæus, one of the Fathers, who became Bishop of Lyons, having been the disciple of Polycarp, appointed Bishop of Smyrna by St. John.

CHAP. II.

Churches. The chief historical value of the document consists in the proof it affords us of their identity.

Laurentius. 604.

"To our very dear Lords and Brothers, the Bishops and the Abbots in all lands of the Scots *, Laurentius, Mellitus, and Justus, servants of the servants of God. When the Apostolic See, according to its custom of sending missionaries throughout the world, sent us to preach the Gospel to the pagans of the West, we came to Britain without previous knowledge of the inhabitants. But both Britons and Scots we esteemed highly for their sanctity, believing that they conformed to the customs of the Church universal. Even when we were made aware that this was not the case with the Britons, yet we hoped better things of the Scots. We have, however, learned from Bishop Dagan, who has lately arrived in the island, and from the Gallican abbot, Columbanus, that the Scots do in no respect differ from the Britons. Bishop Dagan indeed, since he came among us, has not only refused to eat with us, but even to take his food in the same house with us."† He endeavoured to narrow the controversy to the one point, which was really of some practical importance, if they were to act together — the time of observing Easter — but the attempt at conciliation came too late. The conduct of Augustine had exasperated the members of the Celtic Church. The Italians were regarded as foreigners, seeking to lord it over the native Church, and the Scots and Britons were determined to yield their independence to neither threats nor entreaties.

613.

In the year 613, the church of St. Peter and St. Paul, to which a monastery was attached, and the first stone of which had been laid by Augustine, was consecrated by Laurentius. The king was present, together with a vast

* I thus translate "per universam Scotiam," because Ireland was included in the address, if not specially referred to.

† Bede, ii. 4.

concourse of people. Thrice the archbishop struck the closed door, saying, "Peace be to them that enter in, and peace to them who go hence." Then the archbishop and the clergy in procession chanted the twenty-fourth Psalm, "The earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is," until they arrived at the altar, when the Litany was sung, at the conclusion of which the archbishop invoked a blessing upon the work in hand;—"Grant that here Thy priests may offer unto Thee the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Grant that here Thy faithful people may perform their vows. Grant that here the burden of sins may be removed, and that the fallen may be restored to grace. Grant to all who shall enter this holy house that they may obtain their petitions, and evermore rejoice in Thy goodness. Amen."* CHAP. II. Laurentius. 613.

When the church was consecrated, the remains of the late Archbishop, of Liudhard and of Queen Bertha were removed from the place of their temporary interment to the north porch. We can imagine the feelings of Laurentius and of Ethelbert, as they took one more last look, as it were, upon what was mortal of him who first preached the Gospel to the Saxons, and of her whose eulogy it is, that we know nothing of her history, except that by her pious example and her domestic virtues she prepared the way for the coming of our Lord. The silence of history is praise.

Instead of appointing secular clergy to officiate in the new monastery, some of the monks were ordained to the priesthood; this created jealousy on the part of the seculars, a jealousy which more or less in every age prevailed.

When we remember that although Laurentius was a

* Wolstan, "Carmen," in Act. SS. Bened. v. 629; compare Egbert's Pontifical, and that of Jumièges, in Martene, De Ant. Eccl. Rit. ii. 214. ed. 1788.

CHAP. II.

Laurentius. 610.

secular, the first archbishop had been a monk, it appears extraordinary to find that a question was now raised, whether it was consistent with the character of monkhood for monks to exercise the sacerdotal office. But the question being mooted, Laurentius in 610, or rather at the end of 609, determined to send Mellitus, who in 604 had been consecrated Bishop of London, to Rome, in order that he might obtain information on this and some other subjects. He was probably not unwilling to call the attention of the authorities there to the Church of England, the English mission since the death of Gregory having been almost forgotten at Rome. The archbishop himself never received that mark of Roman favour, the pallium. Mellitus, as we shall have presently to narrate, was well received at Rome, but he did not return with the pallium. Doubts may have been entertained as to the ultimate success of the mission.

616. Only three years elapsed and Laurentius again stood in the porch of the newly consecrated church, to officiate at the funeral of the noble-hearted king to whom the Christianity of England is more indebted than to Augustine or even to Gregory himself. His death was the cause of much trouble to the Church.

In all missions there must arise a difficulty in settling the law of marriage. When, for instance, a convert presents himself for baptism attended by more wives than one, what is the missionary to recommend? The question relates not merely, or chiefly, to the male convert, but to the wives whom he is called upon to repudiate. The Scriptures are clear on the subject that a bishop is to be the husband of one wife only — and it is equally clear that monogamy is the law of Christianity; but the question, which becomes perplexing, relates to the course to be pursued when matrimony has been contracted before conversion.

CHAP. II.

Laurentius. 616.

Although the Teutonic races enforced the marriage vow very strictly, yet polygamy was not wholly unknown among them, and one very remarkable custom prevailed; the son, in the royal family especially, was expected to marry his stepmother, if his father left a widow.

In the sixth century, Ermengisl, King of the Varni, left the injunction, "Let Rudiger, my son, marry his stepmother, even as our national custom permits."*

Augustine felt the difficulty of his position in this respect, and applied to Gregory for advice. Gregory's answer was: "A certain worldly law† in the Roman commonwealth allows, that the son and daughter of a brother and sister, or of two brothers, or two sisters, may be joined in matrimony; but we have found, by experience, that the offspring of such wedlock cannot thrive; and the Divine law forbids a man to 'uncover the nakedness of his kindred' (Levit. xviii. 6, 7). Hence of necessity they must be of the third or fourth generation of the faithful, that can be lawfully joined in matrimony; for the second, which we have mentioned, must altogether abstain from one another. To marry with one's mother-in-law is a heinous crime, because it is written in the law 'Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father;' now the son, indeed, cannot uncover his father's nakedness; but in regard that it is written 'They shall be two in one flesh' (Gen. ii. 24), he that presumes to uncover the nakedness of his stepmother, who was one flesh with his father, certainly uncovers the nakedness of his father. It is also prohibited to marry with a sister-in-law, because by the former union she is become the brother's flesh. For which thing also John the Baptist was beheaded, and ended his life in holy martyrdom. For

* Kemble, Saxons in England, ii. 407.

† Justinian. Institut. i. x. 4. See Hussey's note on Bede, i. 27.

CHAP. II.

Laurentius. 616.

though he was not ordered to deny Christ, and indeed was killed for confessing Christ, yet in regard that the same Jesus Christ our Lord, said, 'I am the Truth,' because John was killed for the truth, he also shed his blood for Christ. But forasmuch as there are many of the English, who whilst they were still in infidelity are said to have been joined in this execrable matrimony, they, when they come to the faith, are to be admonished to abstain from each other, and be made to know that this is a grievous sin. Let them fear the dreadful judgment of God, lest, for the gratification of their carnal appetites, they incur the torments of eternal punishment. Yet they are not on this account to be deprived of the communion of the body and blood of Christ, lest we should seem to revenge upon them those things which they did through ignorance before they had received baptism. For at this time, the Holy Church chastises some things through zeal, and tolerates others through meekness, and connives at some things through discretion, that so she may often, by this forbearance and connivance, suppress the evil which she disapproves. But all who come to the faith are to be admonished not to do such crimes. And if any shall be guilty of them, they are to be excluded from the communion of the body and blood of Christ. For as the offence is, in some measure, to be tolerated in those who do it through ignorance, so it is to be severely punished in those who do not fear to sin knowingly."*

On the death of Ethelbert this difficulty presented itself in a practical shape. Ethelbert had married again and left a widow: according to the custom of the country, Eadbald his son and successor espoused his stepmother. Laurentius remonstrated, and was so vehement in his

* Bede, i. 27.

denunciation of the new king's conduct, that Eadbald threw himself into the hands of the reactionary party. An infidel party existed in Kent. The infidels backed the king in his opposition to the archbishop, and the reactionary spirit extended itself to the remoter dependencies of the Kentish crown.

Some persecution arose in London and Rochester, and the Italian missionaries appear not to have entered upon their duties with any ambition for martyrdom. On the occurrence of the first difficulty, as we have seen in the life of Augustine, they would have retired from the noble work in which, without counting the cost, they had engaged, if it had not been for the vigour and firmness of Gregory; and now at the first threat of persecution, we find Mellitus, Bishop of London, and Justus, Bishop of Rochester, at Canterbury, consulting with Laurentius, not as to measures to be adopted to resist their opponents, but as to the expediency of looking back from the plough to which they had put their hands. They did not find another Gregory in Laurentius; he who trembled at Aix, was still a coward at Canterbury. He counselled flight, and prepared to follow his brother bishops into Gaul. But some sense of duty remained in him: he felt the disgrace of abandoning the mission of which, under Augustine, the success had been great. There was no actual persecution at Canterbury. The king was a person open to conviction, and the Archbishop determined to make one other attempt to convince him of his error.

As in the case of Augustine, I shall here present the reader with Bede's account of what took place. "Laurentius," he says, "had determined to follow the example of Mellitus and Justus, and to quit Britain for ever. But on the night preceding the day fixed for his departure, exhausted by weeping and praying, he threw him-

CHAP. II. Laurentius. 616.

self upon his bed, which he had expressly desired to be strewed for him in the church of St. Peter and St. Paul, and fell fast asleep. In the dead of the night the Prince of the Apostles appeared to him, and having scourged him much and long, demanded of him with apostolical sternness what he meant by deserting the flock which he had himself committed to his care, and to whom he meant to consign those sheep of Christ, whom he was leaving in the midst of wolves. 'Are you,' he said, 'forgetful of my example, who for the little ones of Christ commended to my care, in token of His love, endured bonds, stripes, imprisonment, tortures, yea, death itself, even the death of the cross, from the hands of infidels, the enemies of Christ, that I might share the crown of Christ?'

"Animated by these wounds and stripes, as soon as it was morning Laurentius repairs to the king, and, uncovering, reveals to him his lacerated body. Overwhelmed with astonishment, the king demanded who he was who dared thus to treat so great a man. When he was told that for his own soul's sake the bishop had suffered these things, and had been so severely chastised by the apostle of Christ, he was greatly terrified; and straightway anathematising all idolatry, and renouncing his unholy marriage, he accepted the faith of Christ, he was baptized, and in all things from that time, by word and by deed, he laboured to promote the well-being of the Church."*

I treat this as I treated Bede's account of Augustine's miracle. Bede recorded very properly the tradition of the church of Canterbury as he received it, but many years had elapsed before what had been gaining strength by oral tradition was consigned to writing. As the statement here stands it was no miracle, but simply an

* Bede, ii. 6.

imposture and a lie. If Laurentius had intended to impose on the credulity of Eadbald, he would hardly have ordered his bed to be made in the church; he would have lacerated himself, or caused some monk to lacerate him in private. But nothing is more natural than that he should require the straw to be strewn in the church, and that there, near the grave of his friend, he should desire to pass the last sad night of his sojourn in England; nothing more likely than that, with a reproaching conscience, he should imagine himself to receive the castigation he deserved; and few things more probable than that, through the energy of his eloquence, when repeating the fearful dream to Eadbald, he should convert a king whose own conscience was reproaching him for having violated the precepts, and forsaken the example, of an honoured father.

The conversion of Eadbald was a national event, and many stories would be afloat, which a credulous age would easily devise; if Laurentius and the Italian missionaries were not sufficiently careful to prevent the circulation of the wondrous tale, we must not be too severe upon the subject.

When the writer of these pages was contemplating this story so as to regard it from different points of view, it was his fortune to meet a party of friends, representing various shades of opinion, but all of them patriotic and loyal. Mention was made of something wonderful which it was alleged the English fleet had performed in the midst of a storm. The story had gone the round of the newspapers, and was copied into foreign journals, as indicative of the heroism of British seamen, and of the discipline preserved in our navy. The story, however, had been that day contradicted; and the strongest grounds adduced for its rejection,—what was reported to have been done being declared by seamen to be a thing

CHAP. II. Laurentius. 616.

impossible. When this was admitted, one of the company observed, that the truth of the matter was of no great importance; it was believed in France, and this would serve all purposes: not a voice was heard in reprobation of this sentiment. And we are not in a condition to judge harshly of our forefathers when the same principle operated in them, neither party perceiving that whatever the end to be attained, whether political or religious, the principle is evil, and that the father of it ought always to be shamed.

The short remainder of the life of Laurentius appears to have passed in peace. The objects of the mission were not furthered under his episcopate; on the contrary, London was lost, and the whole aspect of affairs was
619. gloomy. He died in the year 619, and was buried in the porch of the monastery, near the grave of his illustrious predecessor.

MELLITUS.*

619. Bede, and the chroniclers who follow him, are careful to inform us that Mellitus was of noble birth, and hence we may infer that the other eminent men who formed the first mission to the Anglo-Saxons, had raised themselves to distinction from the humbler walks of life. "He was," we are told, "noble by birth, but much nobler in mind." He inherited also the aristocratic disease; he laboured, Bede adds, under an infirmity of the body, that is, the gout.†

* The following are the authorities for this life, in addition to those to which special reference is made:—Bede; Florence of Worcester; Henry of Huntingdon.

† Bede, ii. 7. It may be interesting to some of our readers to know what was the usual prescription among the physicians of the time for the

Mellitus. 619.

In the year 601, soon after his first great success, Augustine applied to Gregory for a fresh supply of missionaries from Rome. Mellitus was on this occasion persuaded by Gregory to undertake the office of conducting to England a band of pious and devoted men, who were the more welcome to Augustine, as they brought with them the little library to which allusion has been already made. The missionaries had quitted Rome, but before their arrival in England Mellitus received the following letter from Gregory, which evinces his friendly feeling towards Mellitus himself, and at the same time shows how, even in things relating to a remote and obscure mission, the great man could occupy his mind in minute details. "To his most beloved son, the Abbot Mellitus, Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. We have been in much suspense since the departure of our congregation that is with you, because we have received no account of the success of your journey. When, therefore, Almighty God shall bring you to the most reverend Bishop Augustine, our brother, tell him what I have, upon mature deliberation* on the affair of the English, determined, namely, that the temples of the idols in that

cure of the gout. "Take the herb datulus or titulosa, which we call greata creauleac (tuberose isis). Take the heads of it, and dry them very much, and take thereof a pennyweight and a half, and the pear-tree and Roman bark, and cummin, and a fourth part of laurel-berries, and of other herbs half a pennyweight each, and six peppercorns, and grind all to dust, and put two egg-shells full of wine. This is true leech-craft. Give it the man to drink till he is well. (MS. Cott. Vitell. c. 3.)"—*Turner, Hist. Anglo-Sax.* iii. 483.

* The date of this letter as given by Bede, i. 30, is obviously wrong, for the letters of which Mellitus was the bearer are dated June 22, whilst this, which supposes him gone some way on his journey, bears date June 17. Amongst these is one to Ethelbert, recommending the destruction of the temples. It would seem that the few days following the departure of Mellitus had given Gregory time for more mature consideration.

CHAP. II.

Mellitus. 619.

nation ought not to be destroyed; but let the idols that are in them be destroyed; let holy water be made and sprinkled in the said temples, let altars be erected, and relics placed. For if those temples are well built, it is requisite that they be converted from the worship of devils to the service of the true God; that the nation, seeing that their temples are not destroyed, may remove error from their hearts, and knowing and adoring the true God, may the more readily resort to the places to which they have been accustomed. And because they have been used to slaughter many oxen in the sacrifices of devils, some solemnity must be conceded as a compensation, as that on the day of dedication, or the nativities of those holy martyrs whose relics are there deposited, they may build themselves huts of the boughs of trees, about those churches which have been converted from temples, and celebrate the solemnity with religious feasting, and no more offer beasts to the devil, but both kill cattle to the praise of God in their eating, and return thanks to the Giver of all things for their sustenance; to the end that, whilst some gratifications are outwardly permitted them, they may the more easily consent to the inward consolations of the grace of God. For there is no doubt that it is impossible to efface everything at once from their obdurate minds; because he who endeavours to ascend to the highest place, rises by degrees or steps, and not by leaps. Thus the Lord made himself known to the people of Israel in Egypt; and yet he allowed them the use, in his own worship, of the sacrifices which they were wont to offer to the devil; so as to command them in his sacrifice to kill beasts, to the end that, changing their hearts, they might lay aside one part of the sacrifice, whilst they retained another; that whilst they offered the same beasts which they were wont to offer, they should offer them to God and not to idols; and thus

they would no longer be the same sacrifices. This it behoves your affection to communicate to our aforesaid brother, that he, being there present, may consider how he is to order all things. May God preserve you in safety, most beloved son.

"Dated the 15th of the kalends of July (the 17th of June), in the nineteenth year of the reign of our lord the most pious emperor Mauritius Tiberius, the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord, in the fourth indiction." *

On his arrival in England Mellitus was employed as a missionary among the East Saxons, over whom, in subordination to the Bretwalda, reigned Sebert his nephew. The preaching of Mellitus was attended at first with apparent success: the bondsmen of the Saxons he found at all events willing hearers, who if ignorant and helpless, through the desertion of their pastors, had been brought up nevertheless to despise the worship of the idolaters, and to reverence the church.

Of the East Saxons, London was the capital. Before the Saxon invasion London had been one of the three metropolitan sees of the British Church. But a few years before the arrival of Augustine, the last Archbishop of London is said to have quitted his post and emigrated to Wales.† Augustine, therefore, was fully justified in consecrating Mellitus, the successful missionary to the East Saxons, to be the bishop of that see, although, contrary to the wish of Gregory, he reserved to the see of Canterbury the rights of the metropolitan. "Thus," says Roger of Wendover, "the dignity of this city, which in the times of the Britons had always had its archbishop, was now transferred to Canterbury, that the prophecy of Merlin might be fulfilled, who said: 'Religion shall be destroyed

* Bede, i. 30.

† Theonus II. fled to Wales in 586. Matt. Westm. sub an. 586.

CHAP. II. Mellitus. 619.

in this island, and there shall be a change in the principal sees; the dignity of London shall adorn Canterbury, &c.'" *

Two churches were opened for the converts: St. Paul's, said to have been built by Ethelbert; and St. Peter's monastery in Thorney Island, destined, under Edward the Confessor, to become Westminster Abbey, of which Sebert himself was regarded as the founder. When we consider the number of years which it took to complete the monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul (St. Augustine's) at Canterbury, and when we also remember that London had for many years been an episcopal see, we may fairly conclude that this was a restoration rather than a new building. Hence, we may account for the legend which has come down to us with reference to the last-named of these two churches. The historical fact probably is nothing more than this: the British church in Thorney Island not having been desecrated by heathen worship, did not on its restoration require to be reconsecrated. Mellitus, therefore, when opening it for divine worship did not think it necessary to use the consecration service. But when this was observed by the ignorant and superstitious, they immediately supposed that there must be some mysterious cause for the non-observance of the usual ceremony. And upon this was grounded a legend of which the poets soon availed themselves. According to the legend, it was revealed to a fisherman that the place had been already consecrated by St. Peter himself. The fisherman communicated his revelation to Mellitus, and Mellitus having seen footsteps of the apostle, and undoubted signs of a due celebration of the rite — abstained from repeating what had been already performed by a visitant from heaven. †

* Wendover, sub an. 604.

† In the metrical "Life of Edward the Confessor," published and

In the life of Laurentius we have mentioned that in 609 the archbishop sent the Bishop of London on a mission to Rome: he selected him because from his noble birth he was likely to obtain the consideration which an obscure missionary bishop might not otherwise have received from the haughty Romans. A few years had made a very great change in the imperial city and its inhabitants. The sound of bells met his ears as Mellitus passed through the well-known gates of his native city, — a sound to which his ears were unaccustomed: a new sight met his eyes as he entered the church to return thanks for his protection during a perilous journey — the sight of wax lights upon the altar.* But as in these days we look for political novelties, so in those days new inventions in religion were expected.

When Mellitus joined his friends, who like himself had been the devoted admirers and adherents of Gregory, he learned that the public feeling had also undergone a change, and that Gregory no longer held, in public estimation, the place he formerly occupied. Sabinianus, the successor of Gregory, represented the charity of his predecessor as a prodigal waste of the treasures of the church, expended with the view of obtaining popularity: and with more justice did the people join him in condemning the vandalism of the illustrious Gregory, who, in his zeal against idolatry, had devoted to destruction some of the finest works of art, of which there were

translated by Mr. Luard, under the sanction of the Master of the Rolls, the account of this mysterious consecration is given us in detail.

* Sabinianus, the successor of Gregory, introduced the use of wax lights in the day-time into the Western Church, and the use of bells. Spanheim, Ant. vii. § iii. But wax lights were of much more ancient use in the Eastern Church: for in answer to Vigilantius, St. Jerome states that "through all the churches of the East, when the Gospel is read, the candles are lighted, although the sun is shining, not indeed to get rid of darkness, but to display a sign of joy." Cent. Magdeb. iv. 602; Cabassut. Notitia Ecclesiastica, 75.

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still some persons among the Romans sufficiently civilised to be proud.*

Equally, or even more surprised, must Mellitus have been to hear that Boniface III. had actually assumed the title which Gregory had denounced as a mark of Antichrist, and with the permission of the usurper Phocas, while asserting himself to be the head of the Catholic Church, had called himself the universal bishop.

Mellitus received due honour from Boniface IV., and the manner in which it is alluded to by the chroniclers, shows that doubts were entertained in England as to the kind of reception which awaited the missionary bishop when visiting Rome after the death of Gregory. Mellitus had his place assigned him in the council which assembled on the 27th of February, 610, when the question relating to the employment of monks in the work of the ministry was decided in their favour.

Mellitus returned home without a pallium for the Archbishop of Canterbury. And he also returned to care and sorrow. His royal friend and patron Sebert died, and his inheritance passed into the hands of his three sons, rude, fierce, unbaptized barbarians. There was a reactionary movement among the people, who resorted more and more to the groves where their impure rites were performed in idol temples.

The Bishop of London remained at his post amidst a faithful few, discharging the duties of his sacred office; but he was not left in peace. Mellitus was accustomed to administer the Eucharistic bread and wine to his flock in public.† The royal youths being present at church, probably at some great festival, were induced, through curiosity, to remain during the administration of the Eucharist, and breaking in upon the congregation, they

* Milman, book iv. chap. vi. † Bede, ii. 5.

demanded a share in the goodly elements which they saw distributed to the faithful. The bishop replied, "If you consent to be washed in the sacred font of baptism, you may then partake of this bread, as your father did before you. But if you despise the holy fountain of life, you can by no means be partakers of the bread of life." This refusal to permit them to partake of the bread and wine, the ignorant and insolent youths regarded as an insult and a folly. They thought scorn of baptism; "we will not enter into this laver," they said, "because we do not stand in need of it; and yet we will eat of this bread." The controversy ran high, and ended in the expulsion of the bishop and his clergy, which caused the almost total extinction of Christianity in the diocese.

Mellitus fled to Canterbury. There he found that Eadbald was pursuing precisely the same course as that of the sons of Sebert; and after he had joined the Bishop of Rochester, also a fugitive from his diocese, instead of being prepared to die at their post, the two prelates set sail for France.

The circumstances which led to their return to this country have been narrated in the life of Laurentius; but Mellitus found that although the godless sons of Sebert had shortly before perished in battle with the West Saxons, the people of Essex would not permit the bishop to return to London, but persevered in their idolatry; and the see remained vacant until 654, when Cedd was consecrated Bishop of the East Saxons.

These events occurred between the years 616 and 618. Mellitus then took up his abode in Canterbury, and in 619, on the death of Laurentius, he was appointed to the vacant see. He occupied the metropolitan throne for only five years, and during that time the Italian mission, deprived of London, advanced in no direction. They were, however, years of peace. Eadbald, whose

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repentance was sincere, abounded in good works, like his father, and added a chapel to the monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul, which, under the name of St. Mary's, was consecrated by Mellitus. An anecdote of some interest is connected with the history of Mellitus, which is handed down to us by Bede. There was an alarming fire in Canterbury, which, spreading among the wooden houses, threatened to destroy the city. The poor archbishop was confined to his house by the gout, but he directed his servants to carry him to the scene of the conflagration. Unable to assist the inhabitants, who were trying to extinguish the flames by water, he encouraged them by his prayers, and in answer to his prayers the conflagration ceased.

I cannot help placing by the side of this a paragraph from a diary which I have had the privilege of seeing, and which was kept by a modern missionary bishop, when he was sailing to his station: "The storm had been long raging. Prayer ascended from the various parts of the ship, and I felt, myself, in humbly asking for the abatement of the storm, a persuasion that the prayer was granted. There arose no immediate change, yet towards morning there was a perceptible difference; and as we rose from our various couches, the sun shone out brightly, and the sea, though still swollen, had ceased to rage. The captain told us that the change began at ten o'clock in the evening, but that several hours were required for the excitement of the sea to subside. So it was at the moment of prayer that the wind abated, and the cause of the storm ceased."

It is pleasant to find the missionary bishops of the same church, separated from each other by a gulf of more than twelve hundred years, supported by the same faith, when engaged in the same blessed work.

Mellitus died of the gout in the year 624, and was buried in the porch or cloister of St. Augustine's.

JUSTUS.*

Justus accompanied Laurentius and Mellitus when they departed from Rome in 601 to join the mission at Canterbury. He was a Roman by birth.

In 604 the see of Rochester was established. At first it appears surprising that a separate see should, at such an early period, be instituted in Kent and so close to Canterbury; but we can account for it at once when we are told that from the earliest times Kent had at least two kings, the capital of one being at Canterbury, and of the other at Rochester.† Ethelbert, as Bretwalda, had sufficient influence to induce the sub-king to erect a church, after the conversion of the people, and a chapter of secular clergy was endowed with a portion of land, known to the present day as Priestfield, together with some other estates.‡ Justus was the first bishop.

On the death of Ethelbert, as we have had occasion before to remark, a reaction hostile to Christianity occurred with more or less of severity in Canterbury, Rochester, and London. With the character of the persecution which ensued at Rochester we are not acquainted, but it was sufficient to alarm the easily alarmed Italians, and, in company with Mellitus, Justus fled to France.

The two prelates soon returned, and, more fortunate than Mellitus, the Bishop of Rochester was reinstated in

* The authorities, in addition to those to which special reference is made, are:—Bede; Radulph de Diceto; Florence of Worcester; Chron. S. Crucis; William of Malmesbury; Registrum Roffense.

† See Kemble, Saxons of England, i. 148. He mentions a third king, in subjection at this time to Ethelbert. The distinction of East and West Kentings was preserved till the downfall of the Saxon monarchy.

‡ Registrum Roffense.

CHAP. II. Justus. 624.

his diocese, and there remained until, in 624, he was translated to Canterbury. His first act upon his appointment to the see of Canterbury, was to consecrate Romanus, a devout and holy man, to be his successor at Rochester.

The great event of his short occupancy of the see of Canterbury was the extension of the Kentish mission to Northumbria. This was effected by the marriage of Edwin, the king of Northumbria, with Ethelburga, the sister of Eadbald, king of Kent. Edwin was at this time a pagan, but before he could obtain the hand of Ethelburga, it was stipulated that the young princess should enjoy the free exercise of her religion; and Edwin not only bound himself by a solemn promise to that effect, but added that freedom of religious worship should be conceded to all who accompanied her, whether men or women, clergy or servants. He did not stop here. As if to invite missionary co-operation, he caused it to be insinuated that he was himself open to conviction, "if his wise counsellors found the creed of the queen to be more holy or more pleasing to God than his own."

Edwin had been brought into contact with Christianity, when in early life, persecuted by Ethelfrid his predecessor on the throne of Northumbria, he had fled for refuge to the court of Redwald, king of the East Angles, a contemporary of the Bretwalda Ethelbert, and under him a vassal king.

It is important to remark that Redwald, although he relapsed into idolatry, had received the sacrament of baptism from the missionaries of Augustine, in Kent, and had invited them to his court. The missionaries were not many in number, and Paulinus was one of them. The exiled Edwin was received with much cordiality by Redwald, who at first promised him protection, but was soon

after, assailed by ambassadors from Ethelfrid, requiring him to deliver up young Edwin, dead or alive, and offering a large sum of money if he would comply with the demand. Redwald resisted the temptation until the ambassadors of Ethelfrid appeared before him, with gold in one hand and a threat of war in the other. He then hesitated. It was a moment of awful uncertainty; but Edwin determined to await his fate at Redwald's court, for he knew not whither to fly, and was wearied with the precarious condition of a wanderer's life. He dared not remain in his chamber, where assassins might be concealed; and while others were buried in sleep, all except Redwald and his counsellors, young Edwin, wakeful, sad and solitary, sat on a stone seat at the palace gate, as the place where, if attacked, he might best defend himself, or escape by flight.

In the meantime Redwald had been persuaded, chiefly by the queen, whose influence over him was not always so righteously employed, to resist the temptation, to despise the danger, and to prefer to all other considerations the maintenance of that honour which ought to be the most precious ornament that decorates the brow of a sovereign.*

Two persons compassionating his condition sought the young prince to communicate to him the royal determination before it was publicly announced. The first who appeared was unknown to Edwin, who was surprised by the tonsure and peculiar dress which marked the monk. The prince was inclined at first to resent the intrusion upon his privacy; but the stranger won his attention by foretelling, with an air of authority, that Redwald would neither betray his guest nor permit his enemies to destroy him; and carrying his prediction further, as well he might,

* Bede, ii. 12.

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CHAP. II. Justus. 625.

considering the character of the person whom he addressed, he ventured also to declare, that among the kings of England, Edwin was destined to hold the highest place. "And," continued the mysterious stranger, "if what is now foretold shall come to pass, and salutary admonitions relating to life and salvation shall be addressed to you hereafter by your friendly prophet, will you promise to give heed to his advice?" The promise was easily, perhaps carelessly, made. Then the stranger laid his right hand on Edwin's head, and said, "When this sign shall again be given to you, think of this time and of our discourse, and do not then delay to fulfil the promise which you have now made."

The whole story is characteristic of the times, when the desire was to envelope the most simple transactions in an air of mystery.

There can be little doubt that the mysterious stranger was Paulinus. Paulinus was consistent from first to last, in the error which ultimately involved him in ruin, of regarding temporal success as an evidence of the truth of his religion. Whatever were the hopes he entertained of giving further instruction to the Northumbrian prince, they were rendered abortive; for Edwin was employed for many subsequent years in fighting his way to a throne, and protecting it when won, although an undefined solemn impression had been made upon his mind, and he imagined that he had seen a vision.

Eight years had now elapsed since the event just described: and when the marriage between Edwin and Ethelburga was determined upon, Paulinus did not hesitate for a moment, when Archbishop Justus proposed that he should accompany the princess as her chaplain. Men are inclined to believe that "*all things are double one against another.*"* As Clovis became a Christian through

* Ecclus. xlii. 24.

the influence of his wife Clotilda, and Bertha was instrumental to the conversion of Ethelbert, so now by the marriage of Edwin, Justus anticipated the conversion of Northumbria, and the realisation of Gregory's well organised scheme, of establishing a metropolitan see in the north; he in consequence consecrated Paulinus on the 21st of July, 625, to be Archbishop of York. Justus. 625.

Thus the princess bade farewell to her brother's court, and started for the north to take possession of a throne; and Paulinus attended her, fully convinced that he should win his see. Nor may we omit to state that he was attended by Jacob the deacon; for although the deacon was attached to the mission that, as precentor, he might conduct the service of the royal chapel, and although Jacob may have lacked the powers necessary to elevate him to a higher station in the church, yet he proved himself to be superior to the archbishop himself in the manly virtues which qualify a Christian to become a confessor or a martyr.

Justus communicated the prospects of the mission to the authorities at Rome, and he obtained, what his two immediate predecessors were regarded as too insignificant to receive—the pallium. The truth is, that after Gregory's death the bishops of Rome were so much occupied with domestic affairs, and involved in political troubles, that they had no thoughts to bestow upon a remote mission like that of Canterbury; Gregory's immediate successor would indeed have rejoiced in the failure of any of his projects. Justus seems to have requested letters from the Roman bishop to the king and queen; and the letters came. They were, however, such letters as would scarcely be written in these days to a chief of New Zealand and his wife,—condescending and common-place. Still worse were the presents which accompanied the letters, to wit: a shirt for Edwin, with one gold orna-

CHAP. II. Justus. 625.

ment, and a garment of Ancyra *; to the queen he sent a silver looking-glass, and a gilt ivory comb. The letters were unanswered, and perhaps resented. The realm of Edwin extended, at this time, from the northern shore of the Humber far into the lowlands of Scotland, into the Welsh country of Cumberland, and to the Islands of Man and Mona; the latter being from that time called Angles-Eye, Angles' Island, or Anglesey. So proud was Edwin, that banners, we are told by Bede, were not only borne before him in war; but even in time of peace, when he rode with his officers through his cities, vills, or provinces, his standard-bearer was wont to go before him. When he walked along the street, what the Romans call the Tufa, and the English Thuuf, *i. e.* a globe fixed upon a spear, preceded him.†

Such a person was not to be treated as a mere barbarian, and the letters could only retard the success of Paulinus. As in the case of Ethelbert, Edwin, though prepared to embrace Christianity himself, could not take any step for the conversion of the nation without the consent of his witan; and even then it would be doubtful whether the decision of the king and his wise men would be accepted by his people. He was silent, serious and reserved, passing hour after hour in moody meditation, not knowing what to do. He permitted Paulinus to preach, and Jacob to charm the people by the music of the church; he permitted the daughter with whom Ethelburga presented him to be baptized; he ceased himself from worshipping idols, but he was a statesman, a warrior, a king, and he dared not yet profess himself a Christian.

Paulinus watched the king, he conversed with him, he exhorted him to declare himself, and to take the necessary

* Archdeacon Churton describes this as a gaberdine of strong cloth.

† Bede, ii. 16.

steps for the conversion of the people. But the policy of the prince did not yield to the enthusiasm of the prelate. At length on a certain occasion Paulinus approached the wavering monarch. He was not seated now on the cold stone in the dead of night, but reclined upon his chair of state, with all the paraphernalia of royalty around him. Paulinus laid his hand gently upon the king's head, as if he were still a youth, and asked him whether he knew that sign. It was the feather which broke the camel's back. With the uncontrollable vehemence which impels the undisciplined mind to rush from one extreme to another, the king prostrated himself before Paulinus, and yielded to his suggestion that he should convene his witan.

CHAP. II. Justus. 625.

The Witenagemot was held. The account of its proceedings is preserved in Bede, and is deeply interesting as the earliest report in existence of a parliamentary debate. The first speaker was Coifi, the chief priest of the Northumbrians. It was to this effect: — "O king, consider what this is which is now preached to us; for I verily declare to you that as to my own experience, the religion which we have hitherto professed has no power nor utility in it. For none of your people has applied himself more diligently to the worship of our gods than I; and yet there are many who receive greater favours and higher honours from you than I do, and are more prosperous in all their undertakings. Now if the gods were good for anything, they would rather assist me, who have been most careful to serve them. If, therefore, upon examination you find those new doctrines which are preached to us, better and more efficacious, it only remains for us immediately to receive them without any delay." *

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This speech is of much importance, since it enables us

* Bede, ii. 13.

CHAP. II.

Justus. 627.

to account for the subsequent renunciation of Christianity, which was as sudden and complete as its reception.

Paulinus had made a grand mistake by encouraging Edwin, Coifi, and the other converts to believe that the merits of a religious scheme were to be tried by the temporal advantages which followed its reception. Success in battle, the attainment of political power, the acquisition of wealth, — these were the rewards held out by Paulinus, from his first interview with Edwin at the palace gate of Redwald, until his late victory over the West Saxons and Cuichelm their king. Edwin at that time promised to embrace the Christian faith if he obtained a victory, and the victory was claimed by Paulinus as an evidence of Christianity. We perceive the effects of his teaching in the speech of Coifi, who had evidently conferred with the archbishop; and we shall see hereafter that the overthrow of Christianity in Northumbria, on the defeat of Edwin, is attributable to this error, one into which enthusiasts have frequently fallen.

We are gratified by the wiser speech of one of the wiłan, who may be regarded as the representative of those who are converts from higher motives, and who, when the time of trial came, were "faithful found amidst the faithless."

"The present life of man upon earth, O king! seems to me, in comparison of that time which is unknown to us, like to the swift flight of a sparrow through the room wherein you sit at supper in winter, with your ealdormen and thanes, a good fire having been lit in the midst, and the room made warm thereby, whilst storms of rain and snow rage abroad; the sparrow, I say, flying in at one door, and immediately out at another, whilst he is within, is safe from the wintry storm; but after a short space of fair weather, soon passed over, he immediately vanishes out of your sight into the dark winter from

which he had emerged. So this life of man appears for a short space; but of what went before, or what is to follow, we are utterly ignorant. If, therefore, this new doctrine contains something more certain, it seems justly to deserve to be followed." The other rulers, and king's counsellors, spoke to the same effect.*

On the motion of Coifi, Paulinus was introduced. There he stood: the lofty stature, slightly bending, the dark eye flashing, the black hair curling round his bald head, the slender aquiline nose, the thin, spare countenance, the dignified and venerable appearance of the civilised Italian contrasting with the long-flowing flaxen locks, the round, weatherbeaten faces, and the robust forms of the rude warrior counsellors of the Anglo-Saxon king.† The foreign accent of one who had troubled himself to learn their language, and who addressed them in their native tongue, secured attention, when, in the spirit, if not in the words, of Paul and Barnabas at Iconium, he preached "that they should turn from these vanities unto the living God, who made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein."‡

When the sermon was finished, Coifi rose again, and addressed the witan: "I have long since been sensible that that which we worshipped was nothing; because the more diligently I sought after truth in that worship, the less I found it. But now I openly confess, that such truth evidently appears in this preaching as can confer on us the gifts of life, of salvation, and of eternal happiness. For which reason I advise, O king! that we instantly abjure and set fire to those temples and altars

* Bede, ii. 13.

† Bede had his description of Paulinus from one Deda, who lived at Partney (Peartaneu) in Lincolnshire, a cell belonging to Bardney, and who received it from one who had been baptized by him. Bede, ii. 16.

‡ Acts, xiv. 15.

CHAP. II. Justus. 627.

which we have consecrated without reaping any benefit from them." * The king declared himself a believer; but it was doubtful even yet how far the people would ratify the decision of the witan. He consulted the converted Coifi, and Coifi felt that no one was so well qualified as himself to strike the first blow at idolatry and its temple. He determined to proceed to the chief temple of the Northumbrian kingdom, Godmundham †, near Market Weighton, in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Its name was attractive to him. He felt, and he knew the people would feel, that if the gods could not protect the place to which it was professed that their protection especially extended, they were no longer to be accounted as gods. In this conclusion Coifi showed his consistency, but it was consistency in error.

It was not lawful for the pagan priests among the Saxons to bear arms, or to ride, except upon a mare: the people of York thought Coifi mad, as they saw him mount the king's own war-horse, girded with a sword, and brandishing a spear. The same impression was made as he passed on through the country, attended by his followers. Attention was attracted to his proceedings, and as he approached Godmundham, the multitude were awed into silence. They saw him drawing nigh to the temple; he hurled his spear, and fixed it fast in the temple wall; and when they beheld his followers setting fire to the fane of their impotent gods, they themselves took courage, broke the hallowed septum, and abolished pagan worship in Northumbria.

Meantime a small church built of timber was rising at York, the humble foundation of the magnificent minster,

* Bede, ii. 13.

† Godmundham, *i. e.* the home protected by the gods. Bede calls it Godmunddingaham.

in which now stands the throne of an archbishop, who equals Paulinus in scriptural knowledge and Christian virtue, and excels him in simplicity of character and in purity of doctrine.

Paulinus consecrated the church by the name of St. Peter's, and soon after commenced, though he did not remain to complete, a building of stone. Here, on Easter Day, 627, King Edwin was baptized; and here, too, was fixed by Edwin the archiepiscopal see.

When the happy news arrived in Canterbury of the baptism of Edwin, in which event was read the conversion of his kingdom, the archbishop's own end was approaching. The success of the mission, inaugurated by himself, gladdened the old man's heart. He had been able to accomplish what his friend Augustine had been unable to attempt, and if of the twenty-four dioceses designed by his patron Gregory, only three were in existence, still the establishment of a metropolitan see of York was a great step gained.

When Justus, in his humble cathedral at Canterbury, joined his choir, with all the fervour of a grateful heart, as they chanted the Nunc Dimittis, he seemed to hear a response sent back from the wooden walls of that church in York, where the throne of Paulinus had been erected by Edwin. On the tenth of the following November, in the year 627, the faithful servant of the Lord entered into rest. His mortal remains were placed by the side of his friends and fellow-labourers, Augustine, Laurentius, and Mellitus.

CHAP. II.

Honorius. 627.

HONORIUS.*

Honorius was a Roman by birth, and was distinguished among his contemporaries for having been a pupil of Gregory the Great. Gregory was distinguished for his charity towards the poor, for his abhorrence of the slave-trade, and for his zeal in the cause of education. Actively engaged as he was, both in the duties of his sacred calling and the reformation of the Church, and also in secular pursuits and the affairs of state, he nevertheless found time to become not only the patron of schools, but an instructor of children himself. The department of instruction which he considered to belong to himself, related to his favourite study of music. Gregory had nothing of the conservative in him. The great men of the age felt that there was little in society, as it then existed, worth preserving: they were all for progress, although the progress was not always in the right direction. He found the music of the Church defective, and he applied to it those improvements in the art and science, which had been lately invented or discovered. St. Ambrose introduced into the Western Church the system of chanting which had prevailed in Antioch so early as the year 107, improving what he imported, but venerating a style of music which had probably been inherited from the Jews. Gregory, following his example, increased the number of the ecclesiastical tones, which somewhat resemble our modern keys, from four to eight; and the Gregorian chants, now harmonised according to the improvements of modern science, remain to the present hour the basis of church

* The following are the authorities for this life, in addition to those to which especial reference is made:—Bede; Florence of Worcester; William of Malmesbury.

music in England. He knew that in order to make his reforms effectual, he must commence with the young; and many a young chorister would, like Honorius, make it his boast, through life, that he had been a pupil of Gregory.

As Gregory had selected for his English mission the energetic Augustine, the nobly born Mellitus, and Laurentius the secular priest, so to lead the choir of the church, and by the concord of sweet sounds to attract unbelievers to the place where they might hear the Gospel preached, while aiding the converted in raising their souls to the praises of their Creator, he appointed as a member of the mission his pupil Honorius. And now, when thirty years had elapsed and few remained of the original missionaries, Honorius was chosen, as the successor of Justus, to occupy the see of Canterbury.

To Paulinus, Archbishop of York, he applied for consecration. We left Paulinus at the close of the episcopate of Justus, triumphant in the baptism of King Edwin. And his career had still been a career of brilliant success, for which the hearts of the Kentish missionaries were overflowing with gratitude and joy.

He had attended the ambulatory court of Edwin, passing, as was the wont of the Saxon kings, from town to town, and from vill to vill. The king thus moved from place to place, to administer justice and to receive on his private estates the rents which were paid in kind, and by which the royal household was supported; and with him went Paulinus to preach the glad tidings of salvation.

His first step was to erect a cross. There, by his side would stand Jacob the deacon, and, by the sweet tones of Italian psalmody, the crowds were attracted and were prepared to hear the archbishop when he began to speak. The Spirit of God blessed the preached word; few preachers have been more successful than Paulinus. Places have become historical from their association with his

CHAP. II. Honorius. 627.

name: Catterick on the Swale, near Richmond, in Yorkshire, and Donafield, near Doncaster, were long regarded as sacred spots by Yorkshiremen; but the place where his success was greatest was at Yeverin, in Glendale, where for six-and-thirty days he was incessantly occupied from early morning until night-fall, first in instructing the people, and then, when he had catechised them, in baptizing them by immersion in the little river Glen.

At length Paulinus crossed the Humber with Edwin and his queen. Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire formed part of Edwin's kingdom. At Southwell, Paulinus preached with much success, and his personal appearance, as given in the life of Justus, was described to a friend of the Venerable Bede by one who had received baptism at his hands. When the application from Honorius to receive episcopal consecration was made to him, Paulinus was at Lincoln. There the Reeve or governor had been converted, Blecca by name. He received the sacrament of baptism with all his family, and then devoted a portion of his wealth, which was considerable, to the erection of a stone church. But it was in a little wooden church that Honorius was consecrated as Archbishop of Canterbury: his first duty being to assist Paulinus in laying the first stone of Blecca's projected cathedral. King Edwin, like a wise and prudent man, had not yielded to the impulses of enthusiasm, but had weighed the matter long and well before he changed his religion. But having become a Christian, he exerted himself with all the energy characteristic of his race for the propagation of the Gospel. He not only established the church, with the consent of his witan, within his own dominions, but endeavoured to introduce it wherever his power as Bretwalda extended.

But when we find that it was through his interposition, and comparatively speaking, at so late a period, that

Christianity was introduced into East Anglia*, we are compelled to ask what were the archbishops of Canterbury doing in the way of missions? Why were not the Kentish missionaries at work in East Anglia? So little, indeed, were they accounted of, that when Sigebert the king determined upon establishing the Church in his dominions, he selected for his first bishop not a missionary from the Church of Canterbury, but Felix a Burgundian. It is true that, when it was determined by the Burgundian missionary and the East Anglian king to establish a see at Dunwich†, Felix applied to Archbishop Honorius for consecration; but then we find him immediately afterwards associated with Fursy, a Celtic monk, a person who, although extraordinary tales were circulated of his holiness, was an object of especial dislike at Canterbury, because he cut his hair, as it was said, after the fashion of Simon Magus. In the missions to East Anglia there was no acknowledgment of the metropolitan authority of Honorius.

In the year 633, Honorius must have heard from the traders and merchants who frequented the ports of Kent, that a new mission to England was projected in Italy.‡ There was at Genoa a zealous, devoted man, Birinus, who was studying the Teutonic language, and, to perfect himself in it, conversing freely with foreigners in that port, preparatory to his starting as a missionary to the remote island of the West.

This was, indeed, a confirmation of what was stated in the life of Justus, that the Canterbury mission was re-

* Bede, ii. 15.

† Dunwich, which has long since been swept away by the sea, was situated in Suffolk, and the bishopric was finally settled at Norwich. In the little neighbouring village of Felixstow, is the memory of Felix still preserved.

‡ Even as early as the seventh century the Anglo-Saxons were in the habit of going to Rome by sea. See Wright, Biog. Brit. Lit. i. 91.

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garded at Rome, by the few who took interest in these things, as a failure. But it happened at a time when to all appearance the mission was about to become a great success. There was not much credit due to Justus and Honorius for the success of the missions in Northumbria and East Anglia; but still they were connected with the see of Canterbury, and Honorius thought that he might justly demand a pallium for himself and for the Archbishop of York. He was quite aware also of the policy of keeping King Edwin on good terms with the see of Rome, as he was surrounded by Celtic influences. He therefore suggested a letter to him to be written in a different tone from that which was addressed to him by Boniface. The great sore still existed—the determination of the Celtic bishops to concede to the Archbishop of Canterbury no more deference than that which was due from one bishop to another, all being on an equality—and to this point he likewise directed attention. His application was not without effect. In 634 two splendid palls arrived in England, accompanied by letters from Honorius, now Bishop of Rome. There was a letter also to King Edwin, written in better taste than that of Boniface, to which we have before referred.*

This letter Edwin never received. The letters are dated 634; but before the close of the year 633, at the fatal field of Hatfield Chase, in the neighbourhood of Doncaster, the noble Edwin had lost his kingdom and his life. With him fell the unstable edifice of Christianity, which Paulinus had planted in the north of England. In church and state the desolation of Northumbria was

* The letters were written in the name of Pope Honorius, who was branded by the Council of Constantinople with the name of heretic. See the whole case stated in Milman, Lat. Christianity, bk. iv. c. 6, who observes, p. 138, that the impeccability of the Pope of Rome was not yet an article of the Roman Creed.

frightful. Penda the Pagan hated both the people and their God. He spared neither man, woman, nor child: to convert the once flourishing region into a pathless desert was his avowed object and delight. His ally was Cadwalla, the sovereign prince of the West Britons. He was, indeed, nominally, a Christian; but history has too often to lament the extinction of Christian charity under the deadening fury of sectarian zeal. Cadwalla would not intercede in behalf of Christians who differed from him on the subject of baptism, in the cut of their hair, and on the day of observing Easter.

But where was Paulinus? We have frequently seen that a desire to die for the truth's sake was not characteristic of the Italian missionaries: they were none of them ambitious of martyrdom. Paulinus had an excuse for leaving his flock, and he availed himself of it. He escorted the widowed queen and her children into Kent; who were kindly received, and with tears of tender sympathy by the king, and by Archbishop Honorius.

But the question may be asked, why did not Paulinus return to his church? There was, alas! no church to receive him. Like others among the Italian missionaries he was a man of piety, and had been a popular preacher. He had done much by his personal influence. He had not left a footmark behind him. He, like the rest of his brethren, had no administrative power; he preached and baptized, but there had been no organisation of the Church; not a single institution established. He had, as we have had occasion to remark before, based the evidence of Christianity on the Jewish principle, making temporal success the test of truth. What was the fearful inference which men, who acted on the principle of Coifi, were to deduce from the fatal fight on Hatfield Chase?

The humiliated prelate accepted the kind offices of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the see of Rochester being

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vacant by the death of Romanus, was occupied by the late Archbishop of York. He took with him the pallium, and wore it without rebuke, for it was not considered at that time to belong exclusively to a metropolitan, though seldom granted to any other. He left at Canterbury, a memorial of Edwin's piety and of his own gratitude, a golden cross and chalice, which, a present from the king to the little church at York, the archbishop had been able to rescue from the ruins.

When we speak of the timidity of the Italian missionaries, we must make an exception in favour of one who had passed unnoticed by his superiors in church and state, but who evinced the noble spirit of a confessor, and whose name must be revered by posterity.

All the Christians in Northumbria were not like Coifi; some were like the good Thane, whose speech we gave in the life of Justus, who based their faith on higher grounds than those which were too often inconsiderately taken by Paulinus. They, amidst the general defection, continued faithful, and with them remained Jacob the deacon. The deacon laboured long, earnestly, and with a sympathetic heart to strengthen them in the determination to risk their lives, in confessing Him who died for their sins; and when better times returned, we shall find him teaching the superior music of the "Cantuarians" to the Celtic congregations, not quarrelling with them for their differences of opinion on minor points, while steadily maintaining his own. Firmness of principle and charity in judgment generally go hand in hand.

While Honorius was sympathising with the fugitives, and was deploring the complete failure of the one only missionary effort which had been made from Canterbury, he was mortified by hearing that, without any communication with him, Birinus had arrived in England, acting with the avowed sanction of the Roman see. The Italian

archbishops of Canterbury, from Augustine, the first, to Honorius, the last of the mission, had been provoked and fretted by the refusal of the Celtic bishops to acknowledge their superiority,—it must have been beyond measure galling to be ignored by another Italian missionary who was able to plead that he was acting under the cognizance of the Bishop of Rome.

It is very probable that the mission of Birinus was delayed until the news came of the entire overthrow of the Northumbrian Church; but it is certain that in 634 he received permission from Rome to prosecute his journey to England; and what was the more marked, he was directed to apply for consecration not to Honorius, archbishop of Canterbury, but to Asterius, bishop of Genoa.

When Birinus was expressly directed to confine his exertions to the centre of the island, while a disposition was certainly shown not to permit any interference with the Kentish mission, the necessity of instituting a new mission implied a conviction that the Kentish mission, from inability or from want of opportunity, had not answered the purpose for which it had been instituted by Gregory.

Birinus, not well acquainted with the condition of the country, when he landed on the coast of Wessex, with a view of proceeding immediately into the interior, found to his astonishment, that the conversion of Wessex had never been attempted by the archbishops of Canterbury. The past history of Kinegils and Cuichelm did not, certainly, hold out much prospect of success; but still we ask, why was not the attempt made?

When the attempt was made by Birinus, the difficulties were found to be more apparent than real. The way was prepared before him by Oswald, the Christian king of Northumbria, then on a visit to the court of Wessex.

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He obtained a hearing; he announced the glad tidings of salvation. Kinegils was convinced and baptized; and in a short time, Birinus, surrounded by converts, was laying the foundation of Winchester cathedral.

We have mentioned the name of Oswald, and this reminds us that, within a few years of the utter destruction of the church of Paulinus, Northumbria once more became a Christian country. But when Oswald the king, himself a Christian, had determined to attempt the re-establishment of Christianity, he did not consult the Archbishop of Canterbury; he sent to Scotland and obtained his missionaries from the Celtic bishops, from men who neither shaved their heads after the fashion of Canterbury, nor kept their Easter festival on the same day as the church of Kent. Of all the men of that age, no one has come down to posterity with a higher character than Aidan, the new Bishop of Northumbria. His virtues were such as to compel the reluctant admiration of the candid Bede.*

Aidan, as if to mark his determination to have no connection with the Gregorian missionaries, and not to be regarded as the successor of Paulinus, fixed his see, not at York, but at Lindisfarne, the beautiful as well as the holy island, to the cathedral of which all the churches of Ber-

* Bede, iii. 17. He adds, "the object which he had in view in all he held venerated, or preached, was the same as ours, that is, the redemption of mankind through the passion, resurrection, and ascension into heaven, of the man Jesus Christ, who is the Mediator betwixt God and man; and therefore he always celebrated the same, *i. e.* Easter, not as some falsely imagine, on the fourteenth moon, like the Jews, whatsoever the day were, but on the Lord's Day, from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon; and this he did from his belief of the resurrection of our Lord happening on the first day of the week, and for the hope of our resurrection, which also he, with the holy church, believed would of a truth happen on the same first day of the week, now called the Lord's Day."

nicia, from the Tyne to the Tweed, could trace their beginning, and some of those of the Deiri, from the Tweed to the Humber.

The Celtic missionaries extended their labours with success, and, through their instrumentality, the Gospel was introduced into Middle Anglia. Why the kingdom of Mercia was not occupied by the missionaries of Kent is again a thing extraordinary and unaccountable. The difficulties, as in the case of Wessex, were great; but the Celtic missionaries Diuma, Cellach, and Trumhere proved that they were not insurmountable. Without reference to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lichfield was chosen to be the seat of the bishop of the Middle Angles, as it was the capital of the Mercian kingdom.

In the life of Mellitus we have mentioned the attempt of the Italians to establish a church at London, and how they failed. It is very remarkable that we read of no attempt to regain the lost ground in a kingdom so near, and that the next bishop to Mellitus was, towards the close of Honorius' life, the Celtic bishop, Cedd. Sigebert. the king of Essex, was himself baptized, at Wallbottle, in Northumberland, not by the Archbishop of Canterbury, but by Finan, the successor of Aidan.

The most extraordinary thing of all is, that the missionaries of Kent made no attempt to convert the adjoining kingdom of Sussex. Sussex, the nearest kingdom to Kent, now the adjoining county, was the last of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms to receive the Gospel.

There may be some way of accounting for this by those who have paid attention to local history, but the fact remains, that Sussex was converted by a north countryman, coming by chance, as it appeared, to the Sussex coast; and although Wilfrid belonged to the Italian party, which was at that time found in other parts of England, he acted independently of the see of Canterbury, by

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which no share in the merit of the transaction can be claimed.

The truth is that there was an inaptitude on the part of the Italian missionaries to organise missions, or to originate measures of missionary enterprise. They wanted courage, energy, and sound judgment. They seemed to say, *we are the men, wisdom will die with us*, and because they were Romans, they expected all kings to bow down before them, and all bishops to acknowledge their supremacy. They did not understand the Anglo-Saxon character, and were offended by the independence, even more than by the rudeness, of the people with whom they had to deal.

On the other hand, we are unable to understand to their full extent, the difficulties with which they must have had to contend, while we are to give them credit for self-sacrifice, when, refined and civilised Italians, they took up their abode among an uncultured semi-barbarous race. We are also to remark that in all the other kingdoms of the Heptarchy, the introduction of Christianity was attended by convulsions in the state. Although the first acceptance of the Gospel was beyond expectation satisfactory, there ensued in most cases a reactionary revolution, attended with much bloodshed, and after this the reinstatement of the Church. The half century which elapsed between the landing of Augustine and the death of Honorius was a revolutionary period. Kent alone remained in peace, though at the expense of her political influence. The little reactionary movement which took place at the commencement of Eadbald's reign was of short duration: he himself became ever afterwards a devoted man; and although it affected Rochester, it did not disturb Canterbury. This must be attributed to the influence for good which was exercised by the archbishops and their clergy. The difficulties in keeping

things quiet in Kent may in some measure account for the want of missionary exertion elsewhere, and the example of peace and prosperity which Canterbury exhibited, must have been beneficial to the whole country.

The virtues of the archbishops, their piety, their devotion, and charity, were long remembered with gratitude; and although they committed errors, there is no record of any deviation from the strict laws of morality and religion. It was the common remark, that their lives were consistent, and that they practised what they taught. They imitated the course of life practised in the primitive Church. They applied themselves to frequent prayer, watching, and fasting. They were indefatigable in preaching the word of truth. Contented with the mere necessaries of life, they showed a contempt for worldly possessions, and in their afflictions exhibited a patience, which, at all times a virtue, was peculiarly attractive to the impulsive and undisciplined heathens, violent in their passions, whether of joy or of grief. We are expressly informed, that by their simplicity of life, as well as by what Bede calls the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine, they attracted men to the cross of Christ.*

While they thus inculcated all the meek, lowly, and amiable virtues of the Christian profession, they were instructing the people in the arts of civilisation. The Anglo-Saxons soon learned to excel all the western nations in the fine arts, and we must attribute this, in a great measure, to the instruction they received from the Italian missionaries.

The music of Canterbury, introduced by Honorius and Jacob the deacon, was soon imitated, even in the Celtic churches; and the tendency of music to promote civilisation, while it aids devotion, will not be denied by ourselves, who, by the introduction of music into our national schools, are making England to become a musical nation.

* Bede, i. 26.

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The Celtic churches had not cultivated the sciences either of music or of architecture. A building, formed of the trunks of oak trees, covered with reeds, was sufficient for a bishop's cathedral, and if the reeds were removed, and the roof covered with sheets of lead, it was regarded as magnificent.* The archbishops of Canterbury had erected a cathedral of stone on the model of a Roman Basilica.† There, in imitation of St. Peter's, as it at that time existed in Rome, the altar was erected, not at the east, but at the west end of the church. At the east end was the apse, where stood Augustine's chair, in which each successive archbishop sate, his clergy arranged in a semicircle on either side. It was the ancient form of the Eastern Church, not yet discarded in the West.

When the silver cross was borne before Honorius, almost the last survivor of the Italian mission, upon his repairing to his throne in the apse, there were some whose memory, passing over the long lapse of fifty years, would speak to their children of the time when they first saw the emblem of our salvation borne before the tall and dignified Augustine, taking possession of Stable-gate. And when the voice of the archbishop, in the trembling accents of extreme old age, pronounced the benediction, they would tell of the sweet voice of the young Honorius, as he led the choir, when they entered Canterbury, and by the melodious tones of music spoke to their hearts, before their minds were enlightened by the truth. There would the younger ecclesiastics gather round the venerable archbishop, who would discourse to them of the virtues of the great Gregory; and he would direct them, if ever it should be their happiness to visit the

* Bede, iii. 25.

† A description of the first cathedral taken from the Basilica of St. Peter's at Rome, may be found in Professor Willis's learned description of Canterbury cathedral.

imperial city of Rome, to repair to the monastery on the Cœlian Mount, over which Augustine had presided, and where for many years were preserved, in affectionate remembrance of Gregory, the book out of which he was accustomed to instruct his pupils in music; the couch on which, being throughout life an invalid, he would occasionally, while giving instruction, recline; and the old man would add, with a suppressed smile, the rod with which he would correct the inattentive.

When Honorius stood at the grave of Paulinus in 644 he felt that he was the last of his generation. He lived ten years after this, but seems to have confined himself entirely to his duties at Canterbury. He had outlived his contemporaries. He seems to have supposed that he had outlived his church. Churches had sprung up around him, which deferred not to the see of Canterbury. He did not, like his predecessors, name his successor. He thought no Anglo-Saxon worthy to succeed to the throne of Augustine, and of Italians there were none, for he thought not of the distant Jacob the deacon. He was the last Italian archbishop of the Anglo-Saxon Church. Weary and heavy laden, he heard the voice of the Saviour, "Come unto me." It was as music to his soul, and he joined his Master there, where the wicked cease from troubling and the righteous find a rest which never ends. Honorius died on the 30th of September, 653, and was buried at St. Augustine's.

CHAP. III.

DEUSDEDIT AND WIGHARD.*

Want of Success in Italian Mission. — Missionary Labours of the Celtic Church. — Conciliatory Measures. — Tendency to Centralisation. — Frithona or Deusdedit. — Conference at Whitby. — Colman. — Wilfrid. — Death of Deusdedit. — Election of Wighard. — Wighard's Death. — Vitalian. — Hadrian. — The Emperor Constans in Rome. — Theodorus appointed to Canterbury.

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THE well organised plan of Gregory the Great had been to establish two archbishoprics, one at London and another at York, with twenty-four suffragans—twelve to each metropolitan. But it is one thing to devise a great measure, and another thing to carry it out. What the great mind of Gregory conceived, the inferior agents whom he set in motion had been unable to accomplish. When the last of his missionaries died, there was no Archbishop of London, there was no Archbishop of York; and for a year and a half afterwards there was no Archbishop of Canterbury. There were bishops both at London and at Lindisfarne, but they represented the Celtic mission, and made no pretensions to metropolitan authority, or to rights over other sees. The only bishopric which existed to bear witness to the labours of the Italian missionaries, when Honorius breathed his last, was

* Authorities:—Bede; Anglo-Saxon Chronicle; Eddii Vit. S. Wilfridi, in Gale's XV. Scriptores; Florence of Worcester; Elmham.

the little see of Rochester, about six and twenty miles from their settlement at Canterbury.

Deusdedit.

Nevertheless, the work of conversion was proceeding in a very satisfactory manner.

The kingdom of Kent had been converted by the missionaries who settled at Canterbury. Hampshire, Dorsetshire, with part of Devonshire, Wiltshire, Berkshire, with part of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire with Middlesex up to the Chiltern Hills, forming the kingdom of Wessex, which stretched northward to the Thames and westward to the Severn, had been converted through the labours of an Italian missionary; one who sympathised with the missionaries of Canterbury both in doctrine and discipline, but who did not emanate from them, and who acted in independence of the archbishop; not opposed to him, but not acting in subordination to him, or admitting his authority. It was possibly the intention of Birinus, if he had lived, to establish a metropolitan see at London; the metropolitan powers assumed by the bishops of Canterbury being contrary to Gregory's intention. Norfolk, Suffolk, with part, if not the whole, of Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, forming the kingdom of East Anglia, which occupied the east end of the island, and stretched to the north and west up to the Wash and the marshes of Lincoln and Cambridgeshire, were converted by Felix, a Burgundian, who had less connection with Canterbury than even Birinus, having associated with himself the Celtic missionary, Fursy. Essex, Middlesex with the southern part of Hertfordshire, forming the kingdom of Essex, after an unsuccessful attempt on the part of the Canterbury missionaries, were converted by the zeal of the Celts. The Celtic missionaries were actually employed in converting all the midland counties, which comprised the kingdom of Mercia, occupying nearly all that portion

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of England which lies east of the Severn, and south of the Humber, including a portion of Herefordshire and of Salop beyond the western bank of the former river. After the failure of Paulinus all the northern counties from the wall of Antoninus to the Tyne, or more properly the Tees, forming the kingdom of Bernicia, and from the Tyne or Tees to the Humber, forming the kingdom of Deira, were indebted for their Christianity to Celtic missionaries, whose virtues are recorded by Bede. Cornwall and Devon, north and south, Cheshire, Lancashire, Cumberland, Wales, all the north of Scotland beyond the Picts were under the superintendence of Celtic bishops, by whom the missions had been organised.

The different churches adhered to their respective rituals; and the injudicious attempts made by Augustine and some of his followers, to compel uniformity by an assertion of authority, backed by letters from the Bishop of Rome, provoked the independent spirit of the Celtic bishops, and made their adherence to them more rigid. But in the Saxons whom they converted, the same prejudice in favour of the peculiarities of the Celtic Church did not exist, and it is creditable to the missionaries that they employed the minds of their converts with the weightier matters of the Gospel. There was, at the same time, a growing feeling of respect for the superior civilisation which existed in Canterbury; and for the centre of civilisation, the imperial city of Rome. The intercourse between the different kingdoms of the so-called Heptarchy was increasing. Intermarriages had taken place between the subjects of the different kingdoms; and consequently, in those kingdoms, the Christians were beginning to arrange themselves in opposite parties. This became more marked when the kings of Northumbria and Mercia brought their queens from Kent, devoted to Kentish

peculiarities and customs. So long as the Celtic ritual and customs prevailed in one kingdom and the Italian in another, there was no practical annoyance, but the inconvenience was severely felt when in the same vicinity, in the same household, even in the court of kings, while one party was keeping Easter the other was observing Lent. Theorists and divines were slow to yield on either side, but the laity were beginning to think that the differences between the two parties were formal rather than substantial, and they were anxious for a compromise.

The theorists and leading divines of the Celtic party had tacitly; through want of sufficient investigation and learning, made a concession which rendered the controversy between them and the Italians no longer of any real or vital importance. The Italians assumed the ground, and the Celts did not oppose it, that St. Peter was the Prince of the Apostles, and that the Bishop of Rome was St. Peter's successor. If, the Italians argued, St. Peter was the Prince of the Apostles, and the Bishop of Rome is his successor, then some amount of deference and respect must be due to his ordinances and decisions. The inference was so clear, — the erroneous concession having been made and the fact admitted,—that the only question which remained, related to the amount of deference to be made, or of obedience to be demanded. The demands from Rome had not been great, and so far as they had been already made, they had been perfectly reasonable.

All things were thus conspiring to a reconciliation, and such a reconciliation as could not fail to strengthen the Church of Canterbury.

We must add that there had been growing up in the Anglo-Saxon mind a tendency and inclination towards centralisation. It was effected sooner in the church than

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in the state; but still we may trace it in the existence of the several Bretwaldas. Supposing the title of Bretwalda merely to denote the king who, by force of arms or by mental superiority, had made himself the most distinguished chief of the Anglo-Saxon race, the very fact of his being invested with a title, combined with the readiness with which submission was yielded to his dominion, is sufficient to show, that there was an expectation and desire on the part of the great body of the people, to see the whole nation brought under one sway.*

These observations are necessary both to account for the wonderful success of Archbishop Theodorus, and for the delay of nearly two years between the death of Honorius and the consecration of Deusdedit, during which time the see of Canterbury was in abeyance. There was a good understanding between the kings of Northumbria, Wessex, and Kent. They all desired to compromise differences; they all saw the necessity of having a metropolitan to effect this object; and they all admitted that it would be the best policy to permit the metropolitan power to remain where, in theory, it already existed.

The difficulty was to find a man, judicious and wise, to effect what it required both firmness and tact to accomplish. Nearly two years elapsed, and the choice fell upon Frithona; and a better choice could not have been made. Frithona was consecrated by Ithamar, bishop of Rochester,

* Mr. Kemble, in refuting the prevalent notions with respect to the institution of the Bretwalda, considers him to have been a dux raised to power by a variety of circumstances. I think that the inclination to convert the dux into a rex, and to regard him as the emperor of England, began to show itself early, though counteracted for centuries by opposite interests. I have used the familiar term Bretwalda, instead of the correct one, Brytenwealda, on the principle I have adopted of employing names and terms, even when incorrect, as sanctioned by custom. See Kemble's Saxons in England, vol. ii. p. 20.

on the 26th of March, 655.* He was a West Saxon. The church of Wessex, as we have seen, accorded with the Canterbury mission in all points of doctrine and ritual, and it was a wise step to select one of the missionaries of that people to preside over the church of Canterbury, on the part of those who desired to see in the Archbishop of Canterbury a real and effective metropolitan.

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Deusdedit. 655.

The Jutes of Canterbury, proud of their Italian connection and of the privilege of their superior civilisation, were not very willing to receive a Saxon archbishop, and Frithona thought it expedient to assume a Latin appellation. He is known in history as Deusdedit. While his new name accorded with the fastidiousness of foreign taste prevalent in Canterbury, a representative of the Italian party, who was connected with the mission of Birinus, was more likely than one who had formed part of Augustine's mission, to obtain a hearing from the bishops of the Celtic Church. Deusdedit immediately put himself into communication with the Celtic party†; while he gave entire satisfaction to the people of Canterbury.

With such success did Deusdedit labour in the great work of conciliation, that between the years 657 and 664, we find him attending a Witenagemot of the king-

* Ithamar was himself a Saxon, consecrated by Honorius; the only Saxon who had been admitted to the episcopate by the Italian missionaries.

† It was on this ground that, according to Eddius, Wilfrid refused to receive consecration from Deusdedit: — "Sunt hic in Britannia multi episcopi, quorum nullum meum est accusare, quamvis veraciter sciam, quod aut Quartodecimani sunt ut Britones, ut Scoti, aut ab illis ordinati, quos nec apostolica sedes in communionem recipit, *neque eos qui schismaticis consentiunt.* Et ideo in multa humilitate a vobis posco, ut me mittatis cum vestro præsidio trans mare ad Galliarum regionem, ubi catholici episcopi multi habentur; ut sine controversia apostolicæ sedis, licet indignus gradum episcopalem merear accipere." — *Eddius, Vita S. Wilfridi*, p. 57.

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The King of Northumbria had more difficulties to encounter than those which lay in the way of the Mercian king; and so long as Aidan and Finan lived, the party distinctions were pertinaciously sustained. They were not prepared to make any concessions to the sees of Canterbury or of Rome; and they were well aware that the independence of the Celtic churches could only be maintained, by preventing, through a difference of custom and ritual, any intercourse, except that of charity, between the two rival parties. They thought that party feeling, which the kings and the laity wished to suppress, ought to be, for the sake of truth and independence, maintained and encouraged. Their piety, the admiration even of their opponents, secured for them an influence which it was impossible to resist. But when Colman succeeded to the see of Lindisfarne, there was an opportunity for uniting the churches of the north and south, of which the King of Northumbria soon availed himself; for Colman, although as decided a party man as Aidan and Finan, although a man of piety and of inflexible firmness, was not a man of much intellectual power or logical skill.

The king proposed a conference between the two parties. This, under the circumstances, Colman could not refuse. The conference was appointed to be held, in the very centre of the Celtic operations, at Whitby, known at that time by the name of Streanes-heale, which Bede interprets, Sinus Phari, or the Bay of the Lighthouse. This

* If Tuda were present at Medeshamstede, the consecration must have taken place after the Whitby Synod, but I think it is sufficiently clear that what is stated in the Saxon Chronicle on the subject of this consecration is an interpolation subsequently made.

conference is regarded by Wilkins as an ecclesiastical synod, and by Kemble as a Witenagemot*; perhaps it may be considered as uniting the characters of both species of assembly. Ladies were permitted to be present. Hilda, the celebrated abbess, first of Hartlepool, and then of Whitby, is mentioned, and she could not have been present without female attendants. A reporter also attended, as upon an occasion referred to in the life of Justus; and the report of the proceedings is interesting as evincing the skill which our early ancestors displayed in debate. The king presided, surrounded by his counsellors. The two parties arranged themselves on opposite sides. What we may call the conservative side was occupied by Colman, bishop of Lindisfarne, the diocesan, attended by many of the clergy, and by Cedd, bishop of London.

The opposition was headed by Agilbert, late bishop of Dorchester, soon to become bishop of Paris, attended by his chaplain, Agatho, and representing the French missionaries by whom Wessex was converted; by Romanus, the queen's chaplain, representing the Canterbury mission in conjunction with the venerable Jacob, who through the neglect of others, or through his own choice, still occupied the humble position of deacon, but was, nevertheless, regarded as worthy, through his virtues, to take his place among princes and prelates; and by Wilfrid, a young Saxon educated in the Celtic Church, but now become a violent partisan of everything Roman, who represented the rising generation of Northumbria. His wonderful powers of intellect and eloquence marked Wilfrid for prominence in the discussion which was to ensue; but his youth would

* Wilkins, Conc. vol. i. p. 57; Kemble, vol. ii. p. 243. But he places the date in 662. According to the common chronology the year 664 is very much crowded with events.

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have offered an impediment, if it had not been for a clever manœuvre of the leader of his party, which will presently appear.

The proceedings were opened by the king, who pressed the importance of uniformity, and remarked that those who expected to enjoy the same kingdom of heaven ought not to be separated on earth, by differences relating merely to the manner in which the Divine mysteries are celebrated: the question respecting the proper time for observing Easter was a mere question of tradition, and before enforcing a law upon the subject, he was desirous of hearing what was to be urged on either side. Bishop Colman followed in a long speech, the general purport of which was to show that the custom of the Celtic Church ought not to be changed, because it had been inherited from their forefathers, men beloved of God, who derived it from St. John the Evangelist, and from all the churches instituted by him.

The reply belonged to Agilbert, the bishop, who, on rising, said: — "I desire that my disciple, the Presbyter Wilfrid, may speak in my stead, because we both concur with the other followers of the ecclesiastical tradition that are here present, and he can better explain my opinions, in the English language than I can by an interpreter."

The request was granted, and Wilfrid proceeded to address the assembly. He had himself visited foreign parts, and been to Rome, and he was listened to with attention as he said: — "The Easter which we observe I saw celebrated by all at Rome: there, where the blessed apostles, Peter and Paul, lived, taught, suffered, and were buried. We saw the same custom of observing Easter prevalent in Italy and in France, when, with my companions, I travelled through those countries for pilgrimage and prayer, and we have certain information (*comperimus*) that the same custom is observed in Africa, Asia, Egypt,

Greece. In short, in all parts of the world wherever the Church of Christ exists, among all nations and tongues, Easter is observed at one and the same time, except only by these men,—(pointing to the Celtic bishops and presbyters sitting opposite),—and by the abettors of their obstinacy, the Picts and the Britons; by these persons, these occupants of these two islands placed at the extremity of the earth, and not by all even of them, who in their exceeding folly labour to prove that they only in all the world are right, and that all the universe besides is in error." CHAP. III. Deusdedit. 664.

Here the vehemence of the orator was interrupted, by Colman, asking whether it was becoming thus to impute folly to men, whose only fault it was to tread in the steps of St. John. This only added fuel to the flame. In a clever and impassioned speech Wilfrid explained and justified the conduct of St. John; and, unscrupulous in his statements as he was powerful in argument, claimed for his own custom the authority of St. Peter. He pointed out, how things might be tolerated in times of ignorance, which were not to be cited as precedents at a time like the present, when the whole world was enlightened by evangelical truth. He entered upon the history of the great Easter controversy, and affirming that what he called the evangelical doctrine upon the subject had been accepted and confirmed at the Council of Nice, he turned round upon Colman, and exclaimed: "You neither follow the example of John, as you imagine, nor of Peter, whose tradition you knowingly contradict. In the keeping of this great festival of the Church you agree neither with John nor Peter, neither with the law nor with the gospel."

To this Colman, who was unable, evidently, to follow the argument, asked whether Anatolius *, a holy man, much

* Anatolius was bishop of Laodicea in the latter part of the third century, who published canons for ascertaining Easter. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. lib. vii. c. 32.

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commended in Church history, acted contrary to the law and the gospel, when he wrote that Easter was to be celebrated from the fourteenth to the twentieth day of the month. "And is it," he said, "to be believed that our most reverend Father Columba and his successors, men dear to God, and who nevertheless kept Easter after the same manner, thought and acted contrary to the sacred Scriptures? Men whose sanctity was vouched by signs from heaven and the miracles they performed; men whose life, customs, and discipline I shall not cease to follow, and whose sanctity I for one am not prepared to question." "Granted," exclaimed Wilfrid, "that Anatolius was as you describe him, a holy, learned man, worthy of all commendation, I admit it. But what then? What is he to you?"

He then proceeded to show the principle upon which Anatolius computed his Pasch, and charged Colman with ignorance of that very Anatolius upon whom he rested his case. And adverting to Colman's reference to Columba:—"Concerning your Father Columba," he exclaimed, "and his followers, whose sanctity you profess to imitate, and whose rule and precepts you observe, I do not deny the miracles they may have wrought, but I may remind you that, at the last great day, when many shall say to our Lord that in His name they prophesied, and cast out devils, and wrought many wonders in His name, our Lord's reply will be,—Depart from me, for I know you not."

Perceiving, probably, from the sensation this sentence could not fail to excite, that he had gone too far, he adroitly corrected himself: "God forbid that I should apply this sentence to your fathers. It is more just to believe what is good, than to suspect evil in those of whose character we are ignorant. I will admit that they were faithful servants of the Lord, and that serving Him in their rustic ignorance, they were by Him be-

loved. I will admit that through their incorrect observance of Easter they did not suffer loss, because no one was at hand to teach them the right way. But this I do verily believe, that since they certainly kept all the commandments of God so far as they knew them, they would at once have followed his instructions, if any Catholic calculator had appeared among them.* But as for you and your party, you who have heard the decrees of the Apostolic See, or, I should say rather, the decrees of the Church universal, you who have heard the same confirmed by holy writ, you, if you refuse to follow them, are involved in sin, for the commission of which the example of your fathers can be no excuse; for, holy though they were, can you imagine that the example of a few persons, living in one corner of a little remote island, is to be preferred to that of the universal Church of Christ throughout the world? And after all, if that Columba of yours—(of yours did I say? I ought to say, as he was a servant of Christ, of ours also)—if that Columba were, which I will not deny, a holy man, gifted with the power of working miracles, is he, I ask, to be preferred before the most blessed Prince of the Apostles, to whom our Lord said,—'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven?'"

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This powerful peroration, based on the false fact, namely, that St. Peter had laid down a rule for Easter, and on a misapplication of Scripture, decided the victory. The king perceived the impression which the powerful speech had made; he knew what the general feeling was; and turning to Colman, he asked him. "Is it true or not, Colman, that these words were spoken to Peter by our

* He here insinuated that they were not catholic and orthodox.

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Lord?" Colman, who seems to have been completely cowed, could not deny it. "It is true, O king." "Then," said the king, "Can you show any such power given to your Columba?" Colman answered, "No!" "You both, then, are agreed," the king continued, "are you not? that these words were addressed principally to Peter, and that to him were given the keys of heaven by our Lord?" Both assented. "Then," said the king, "I tell you plainly, I shall not stand opposed to the doorkeeper of the kingdom of heaven. I desire, as far as in me lies, to adhere to his precepts and obey his commands, lest by offending him who keepeth the keys, I should, when I present myself at the gate, find no one to open to me."

One is almost inclined to think that the king, while giving a judgment, spoke half in jest, but the decision met with the approbation of the large majority of those who were assembled, and no question was ever raised, after this, among the Anglo-Saxons on the subject of Easter. Many among the Celtic bishops bowed to what they regarded as a judgment of the Church, and conformed to the general practice, while a small party retreated into Scotland with Colman. It is pleasant to hear that, although Colman resigned the Northumbrian bishopric, there was no attempt at persecution on the part of the triumphant party, and that Bede, though of that party a strenuous advocate, does ample justice to the austere virtues of Colman,—a good, weak man.

The report of this important meeting must have given great satisfaction to Deusdedit. Hitherto there had been churches in England; he now hoped that he should live to see a Church of England. Soon after he was informed that Wilfrid, after encountering many dangers off the coast of Sussex, had landed at Sandwich. Nothing can show more clearly the conciliatory spirit of Deusdedit than his

cordial invitation of Wilfrid to Canterbury; for, as we shall presently have occasion to show, Wilfrid had only just before offered a studied insult to the Archbishop of Canterbury.* Deusdedit. 664.

Wilfrid was one of the most remarkable men of the age; right-hearted, wrong-headed, full of genius, but defective in judgment; the most eloquent man of his day, he was overbearing in argument, but in action he was tolerant and generous. An example in adversity and a warning in prosperity, he could submit to the severest self-denial at one time, while at another, his luxury, his splendour, and his habits of expense, involved him in difficulties and excited the indignation of the envious or the ascetic. He died in the odour of sanctity, but at one time the purity of his moral conduct is questionable.† He was a benefactor to his country, for to him the kingdom of Sussex was indebted for its conversion; and yet, as we have already seen, his contempt for his countrymen was offensive. His name is brought more prominently forward in history than it deserves to be, by controversialists

* The good understanding which existed between Deusdedit and Wilfrid is evinced in the fact that Deusdedit on his deathbed commended his diocese to Wilfrid's care.

† From Eddius we learn that he had a son. Vit. Wilf. c. 57. He does not say that this son was born in wedlock, nor does any other author directly mention Wilfrid's marriage, but as Kemble observes, we may adopt this view of the matter as the less scandalous of two alternatives. We account for the silence of Eddius on the subject of the marriage, by bearing in mind that to canonise a married clergyman would have been contrary to the prevalent opinion, which was in favour of clerical celibacy long before the celibacy of the clergy was compulsory. It is probable that Wilfrid married during his long residence in France. That portion of Wilfrid's life is mystified by Eddius in an extraordinary manner. He speaks of a bishop of Lyons who did not exist, and rescues his hero from French influence by a miracle, which represents as a relentless persecutor a queen of France whom the French regard as a great supporter of Christianity and a saint.

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on the one side, because he appealed from an English synod to the Pope; and on the other side, because, while he was the only Anglo-Saxon bishop who prosecuted such an appeal, the decision of the Pope in his favour was contemned by the Church of England; the appellant, for the offence, being cast into prison.

Wilfrid was the son of a thane of Bernicia, and in his childhood he was instructed in the use of arms, and taught to serve the cup gracefully and skilfully in the mead-hall, the accomplishments of the age. Thus accomplished, at an early period of life he was admitted into the household of Eanfleda, the wife of Oswy, king of Northumbria, and the niece of Eadbald, king of Kent. The divergent customs of the Celtic and Italian churches were in the queen's household forced upon his notice, for the queen observed the customs of Kent, while he had himself been trained in the doctrines and observances of the north. Anxious to ascertain for himself the foundation of the differences between the two parties in the Church, with the presumption of youth he determined to go to Rome, and to judge for himself. He received introductions to Boniface, the archdeacon of Rome, from whom he obtained not only knowledge of the arguments, by which the Roman Church defended its doctrine relating to the time of observing Easter, but instruction also in the calculations on which its variations depended.

The scenes of beauty and of grandeur, of nature in its loveliness, and of the relics of art in its perfection, overpowered the enthusiastic mind of the youthful traveller; and from the palaces of Rome and the vineyards of Italy, he returned to the wooden hovels on the bleak hill-side of Northumbria, proclaiming his altered principles by displaying his Italian tonsure, despising everything English, and becoming a vehement assertor to the crowds who surrounded him, of the superiority of all that was Roman.

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The Atheling Alchfrid was one of those who were fascinated by his eloquence and charmed by his enthusiasm; and having first presented Wilfrid with lands at a place called "Æstanford," conferred upon him a monastery at Ripon, then called by the Celtic clergy In-Hrypis, or, according to the Saxon form, In-Rhypum, by Eddius ad-Ripas. His new fashions and Italian affectations were not in accordance with the simple habits of the Scottish monks, to whom the monastery belonged, and they soon quitted their home. Upon this he immediately indulged his newly-acquired and expensive tastes, by erecting a building, the marble and ornamented arches of which, while they faintly reminded the builder of his beloved Italy, filled the minds of native beholders with admiration and astonishment.

He was only thirty years of age when he distinguished himself, as we have seen, at the council of Whitby, to which he was summoned from Ripon. When the king founded the see of York, he nominated to it Tuda, an eminent divine, who almost immediately after was called to his rest, and Wilfrid was his successor. In the vehemence of his party zeal he refused to be consecrated by the bishops in England, because they were not in communion with Rome, or by Deusdedit, because he held intercourse and exchanged good offices with those who had received Celtic ordination. He determined, therefore, to seek consecration from his friend Agilbert, who had ordained him priest, and who had returned to France and taken possession of the see of Paris. He was consecrated at Compiegne, eleven bishops assisting the archbishop of Paris; and the twelve bishops, we are told, according to the custom then prevalent in France, carried him in procession, seated on a chair of gold. On his way back to England he narrowly escaped shipwreck, and what was worse than a wreck, the wreckers off the coast

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of Sussex. Landing at Sandwich, he proceeded to Canterbury, where he and Deusdedit were reconciled.

Although the King of Northumbria had established an episcopal see at York, it was not his intention to invest it with metropolitan powers; but his plan was, in concurrence with the King of Kent, to bring all the churches of England under the superintendence of the see of Canterbury. To this arrangement Wilfrid offered no opposition; and a conference with the archbishop was of great importance both to the archbishop himself, and to the bishop of the great northern kingdom. They met as friends. But they only met to be almost immediately separated. A pestilence appeared in England, which seems to have resembled what is now known as the yellow fever. It devastated the country from Kent to Northumbria, and among its victims were Erconbert, king of Kent, and Deusdedit, the first English archbishop of Canterbury.

Deusdedit, with his parting breath, commended his diocese to the care of Wilfrid, and Wilfrid might naturally expect to be his successor. He administered the see for three years. Another bishop was appointed by King Oswy to the see of York. Wilfrid was not the man to submit to such an appointment without his consent; and when we find him at the end of three years retiring to his monastery at Ripon without a murmur, we conclude that the arrangement was made with his full concurrence. Whether he were to receive the appointment to Canterbury or not, he determined to remain in Kent as long as circumstances would permit, for among the Kentish men he found that congeniality of sentiment which he looked for in vain among the sturdy Englishmen of the north.

The men of Kent had been brought up with strong Italian predilections, and Wilfrid found their habits and tastes similar to his own: a predilection for everything Roman, and those refinements which the missionaries of

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Gregory had introduced. He was not, however, to be the archbishop, although the difficulty of overlooking his claims may have occasioned the delay of four years between the death of Deusdedit and the appointment of his successor. In the Atheling Alchfrid, Wilfrid had a friend who would urge his claims, and plead strongly in his favour; but there were strong objections. The King of Kent, although he invited Wilfrid to administer the vacant see, would hardly feel comfortable with a Northumbrian thane taking place next to himself in his kingdom, and he too a man of overpowering talents, determined will, and extreme in his party views. On the other hand, the King of Northumbria was well aware that the Celtic bishops would never be persuaded to receive as their metropolitan, a man who had not only opposed them, but had opposed them in a manner the most offensive, feeling a contempt for them which he had no wish to conceal. The two kings conferred. They pacified Wilfrid, who did not resent their decision when, as the result of their conference, Wighard was appointed to be Archbishop of Canterbury and metropolitan of all England. He was an Englishman, and this would gratify the patriots of the north; he had been chaplain to Deusdedit, and educated in the church of Canterbury, — a circumstance calculated to satisfy the men of Kent, if they were to have any one for their archbishop except an Italian. As there was no metropolitan in England, no one could claim a right to consecrate the archbishop elect, and without giving offence to the one party or the other, it was impossible to select for the consecrator any one of the English diocesans. It was determined that Wighard should be sent for consecration to Vitalian the Bishop of Rome. Unwilling as any party (with the single exception of Wilfrid), then existing in England would have been to receive a mandate from Rome, yet all parties were agreed in regarding that see

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with feelings of peculiar reverence; and the general admission of an historical error, that he was the representative of the Prince of the Apostles, was paving the very way to the assumption of those despotic powers which the Pope of Rome was ere long to assume.

Wighard started for Rome, reached the city, and there, with most of his companions, died of the plague.

To avoid delay, the see of Canterbury having been vacant for nearly four years, the kings of Northumbria and Kent agreed to leave the choice of Wighard's successor to Vitalian: a confidence on their part which certainly was not abused on his.

The English kings had ignored the plan which Vitalian's celebrated predecessor, Gregory, the originator of the English mission, had laid down; but of this he took no notice.* He approved of the plan proposed for bringing all England under the dominion of one metropolitan, and he promised to look out for a proper person, and to send him as soon as he could be found.†

He was aware that, considering the state of Northumbria, it would be imprudent to send an Italian. No Englishman was at hand; for the existing pilgrimages to Rome, which soon after became a fashion and even a rage, were not then in vogue. A journey from Rome to England and from England to Rome would at that time have consumed the greater part of a year, and as time was of importance, he was consequently obliged to make a choice out of the materials around him. He fixed upon an African, Hadrian by name, a monk of the Niridan monastery, supposed to be situated near Monte Cassino, in the kingdom of Naples. A Roman of that age was not likely to suppose that there was much difference between an African and an English-

* This is implied in Vitalian's letter to Oswy.

† Bede, iii. 29.

man;—both were barbarians, and that would suffice. Hadrian also had visited France more than once; and Britain was so near to France that it was presumed, that if he were acquainted with the customs of the one country, he could not be a stranger to the habits of the other. Hadrian was not a man to be appalled by the difficulties and dangers, real or imaginary, of the undertaking, as his conduct afterwards showed; but he was a man of books, and he knew well that the man required for the see of Canterbury was a man of practical talents and of administrative ability. He declined, therefore, the office for himself; but he soon discovered the very man whom the situation required.

The Emperor Constans II. had lately come to Rome to receive the homage of its bishop, and, with a kind of illegal legality, to pillage the people. Many Greeks were in consequence attracted to the capital, and, whether in the train of the emperor or not, among them was Theodorus of Tarsus. As one great object was to conciliate the Celtic bishops, and as the latter traced their Christianity to the preaching of Oriental missionaries, and professed to agree with the Eastern churches respecting the celebration of Easter, a better selection could not have been made than that of a Greek churchman, who had conformed to the formularies of the Latin Church.

As there were, however, some suspicions as to the orthodoxy of Theodorus, Vitalian would only consent to the appointment, on the condition that Hadrian would accompany Theodorus into England. To this proposal Hadrian rendered a willing assent, and Theodorus was duly consecrated. But he was delayed some time in Rome, because Hadrian certainly, and perhaps Theodorus, exhibited the unorthodox Eastern tonsure. Hadrian was obliged to wait till his hair was long enough to be submitted to the scissors of orthodoxy, probably wielded by Wilfrid's

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friend, Archdeacon Boniface.* The flowing locks at the back of his head were abscinded, the licentious prolixity of his beard curtailed, and with the legitimate amplitude and circularity of crown, he started with Theodorus, as an amicus curiæ, for England.

More than seventy years had now elapsed since the landing of Augustine in England; and true to the article of faith which we have before professed—that, however ruffled or unsatisfactory may be the surface of the Church, the softening and cleansing influences of Christianity are always sanctifying society in its depths, we may call in the evidence of impartial witnesses to establish our position. In the year 660, Sigebert, king of Essex, in the midst of zealous exertions for the good of his country, fell by a hired assassin's hand.† The cause assigned for the murderous deed was, that he was too much accustomed to spare his enemies, and was too ready to forgive them when forgiveness was solicited, and to forget them. The royal martyr, not for an opinion but for consistent Christian conduct, may assure us that Christianity was at this time more than nominal, and that if there was much which was fantastic and mere sentimentality in the Church of the age, there was much also that was real, and deep, and loving.

* I venture to mention this as a probability, because it is a certain fact, that a few years after, the superintendence of this portion of the clerical toilet devolved not on the barber but on the archdeacon. "Clerks that wear long hair are to be clipped by the archdeacon, even against their 'will."—*Archbishop Richard's Canons*, 1175. See also Archbishop Walter's Leg. Constit. 1195. Wilk. Conc. i. 477, 50.

† Bede, iii. 22.

CHAP. IV.

THEODORUS.

Theodorus at Tarsus.—The Ecthesis.—The Type.—Theodorus and Hadrian leave Rome.—Detained in France.—Arrival of Theodorus in England.—His primary Visitation. — Missionaries. — Parochial System. — Chad deposed.—Synodal Action.—Synod at Hertford.— Conduct of Theodorus compared with that of Augustine. — Controversy with Wilfrid.—Wilfrid's Appeal.—Mandate from Rome disregarded by Theodorus.—Archbishop declined attending a Synod at Rome.—Synod at Hatfield.—Encouragement of Learning.—Conversion of Monasteries into Schools.—Hadrian.—Libraries in England.—Alcuin's Account of that at York.—St. Augustine's Catalogue.— The Penitential.—Reconciliation of Theodorus and Wilfrid.

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WHEN we speak of Theodorus as a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, the announcement seems at once to awaken an interest in his history. More than six hundred years had elapsed, since St. Paul was a boy learning Greek in the same schools in which he, who first introduced the study of the Greek language into England, received his education, and became distinguished for his learning, both secular and sacred.† Tarsus still remained in the time of Theodorus a Greek city, placed in the centre of a population whom the citizens regarded as barbarians, in which Greek, the language of civilisation, though freely spoken

* Authorities:—Bede; Chron. S. Crucis; Chron. Petrob.; Florence of Worcester; Gervase; Henry of Huntingdon; Thomas of Elmham; Parker.

† The Britons were converted by Greeks, but most probably through interpreters.

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by the student, was studied as a classical language, just as, during the last century, English was studied at Edinburgh, by men of learning, who, in their fear of provincialism, became the most correct of English writers. The river Cydnus had not, at that time, been changed in its course, nor was the channel filled up, in which once rode the vessel which bore St. Paul from the schools of heathen learning to the shores of the Holy Land. The unhealthy lagoons had not as yet occupied the ancient docks, which St. Basil describes as filled with merchant vessels coming from all parts of the world, Tarsus being to the east end of the Mediterranean what Marseilles is to the west.* Here Theodorus had become experienced in missionary labour, the Christians of the city being often employed in the conversion of the surrounding villages; and here, from the sailors in the docks, he may have heard of the Saxon pirates who rendered dangerous the trade which, from the earliest periods of history, had been carried on between the shores of the Mediterranean and the Cassiterides. Little thought the youthful Theodorus that his old age would be passed in a remote island, chiefly known by its connection with the Scilly Islands,—which these Saxons had subdued; or that his active mind would find its repose in describing to his converts there, the goat-hair tents which dotted those luxuriant plains, upon which, extending on the one side to the sea, and terminating on the other with the Taurus, he had been accustomed to look down from the terraced roofs of his native city.

The Eastern Church, during the middle life of Theodorus, was shaken to its centre by the Monothelite controversy. The controversy raged with a fierceness which roused the passions of emperors as well as of prelates, and filled whole towns with strife and bloodshed. It originated

* Howson, Life of St. Paul, i. 20.

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in the early part of the century, in the desire of the Emperor Heraclius to conciliate the Monophysites, and the chief adviser of his imperial majesty was Sergius, the patriarch of Constantinople. The author of the heresy was Theodorus of Pharan, an Arabian bishop, and it was sanctioned by Honorius, the Pope of Rome, who in the sixth general council was excommunicated. Under the direction of the patriarch Sergius, the emperor published what was called the Ecthesis (ἔκθεσις τῆς πίστεως), an expository edict which, under a pretence of impartiality, was in truth a mere party document. It prohibited any further controversy on the question between the Church and the Monophysites, — whether in the Incarnate God there be one nature or two,—and declaring authoritatively that there can be in our Lord one only will, it assumed, by a *petitio principii*, that the teaching of the opposite party leads of necessity to the idea of two wills contrary and conflicting.

The heresy was opposed by Sophronius, patriarch of Jerusalem, who summoned a council, in which the new doctrine of the Monothelites was declared to be heretical, the assertion of one will in two natures being as nearly as possible a contradiction in terms. The Church of Rome, under John IV., returned to orthodoxy, and by a council assembled in that city the imperial edict was rejected. But the influence of the Roman Church was in the East inconsiderable, and the controversy raged with unabated ferocity, until it received a new turn under the Emperor Constans II., who, for the sake of peace, was advised to publish another edict, known as the Type of the Faith (τύπος τῆς πίστεως), less dogmatical in its tone than the Ecthesis, but enjoining silence under heavy penalties upon the subject of the one will and one operation in our Blessed Lord.

It is impossible to suppose that Theodorus did not take

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an interest in these controversies; and when we find that Vitalian, upon his name being proposed to him for the see of Canterbury, was suspicious of his orthodoxy; that Agatho, anxious to establish his character for orthodoxy, was urgent that he should assist at the Council of Constantinople; and that the future archbishop came to Rome, just at the time when Constans, attended by a multitude of Greeks, visited the imperial city, we may suspect that Theodorus the Philosopher, as he was called, may at one period have inclined, for the sake of peace, to accept the Type, and that he first entered Rome as one of the train of Constans; but be that as it may, of his orthodoxy, when Hadrian recommended him to Vitalian, there is not the shadow of a doubt.

Of the manner in which Theodorus was appointed to the see of Canterbury, mention has been made in the preceding chapter. He had no wish to return to Greece, and he had nothing to attach him peculiarly to Rome.

He left the imperial city in March, 668, accompanied not only by Hadrian, but by Benedict Biscop; who, though a Briton by birth and educated in the Celtic Church, had become enthusiastically attached to the Italian usages and to everything connected with Rome. Benedict was in point of learning inferior to neither Theodorus nor Hadrian. They were all of them illustrious personages, and each was attended by a large retinue. Such were the perils, however, of a journey from Rome in those days, that Theodorus did not reach England before May, 669. He went by sea to Marseilles, and thence proceeded to Arles, where orders came from Ebroin, mayor of the palace, that he was to advance no further.

There were grounds for suspecting some political intrigue. The Greek emperor had just visited Rome,—a very unusual occurrence, and Constans, though a man of the vilest and most degraded character, had been received by

Vitalian with a servility of adulation, which, as Milman observes *, contrasts remarkably with the treatment which fifty years later, from the same quarter, awaited the Cæsars of the West. In his hatred of Constantinople, Constans II. had proposed to remove the seat of empire from the shores of the Bosphorus to the banks of the Tiber, and to restore ancient Rome, which he in the meantime pillaged, to its former grandeur. The effect of such a report upon the rulers of the Franks can be easily understood, and when of three personages travelling with credentials signed by the Bishop of Rome,—himself only a subject of the Emperor of the East, and in whose city a Byzantine governor had his residence,—the one was a Greek and the other an African, some suspicion of political intrigue might be fairly entertained.

When at length permission was given to the travellers to quit Arles, they were directed to pursue their route in separate parties, under plea that there might otherwise be a difficulty in making provision for their respective retinues. While Hadrian went first to the Bishop of Sens and then to the Bishop of Meaux, Theodorus was permitted to repair to Paris; and his object in visiting that city was, that he might confer with Agilbert its bishop, who had formerly held the see of Dorchester in England, and from whom, therefore, Theodorus might expect to obtain information which might be useful to him in the seat of his future labours.

When the arrival of Theodorus at Paris was made known to the King of Kent, Ecgbert sent an embassy under the ealdorman Raedferth, to negotiate with Ebroin for the departure of the archbishop and Hadrian. Hadrian was, for some reason not assigned, detained in France for two years, but the archbishop obtained his passport,

* Milman, Latin Christianity, ii. 135.

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and Benedict Biscop, it would appear, formed part of his suite. Nevertheless the troubles of Theodorus did not yet cease, for we find him detained again at Estaples by severe indisposition, from which, however, he speedily and entirely recovered.

On the 27th of May, 669, amidst great rejoicings, Theodorus was placed in Augustine's chair at Canterbury, and with all the ardour of youth, the grand old man, being now sixty-six years of age, commenced his historical career and addressed himself to the duties of his station.

We shall contemplate him — first, in the discharge of his episcopal duties; then, as a patron of learning; and lastly, as himself an author.

I. Immediately after his enthronement, he made a general visitation of his province, and, prepared as the nation was to receive him, he was universally acknowledged as the metropolitan and primate of England. The visitation was accomplished with less difficulty than we might at first suppose. The old Roman roads remained, and the people were accustomed to assemble from great distances when notice was given that a missionary had taken up his position at any well-known station. Princes, prelates, and peasants crowded to hear and see the long expected and much talked-of archbishop. Theodorus inquired diligently into the conduct of the clergy, insisted on a uniform observance of Easter, and exhorting the people to abstain from idols, to renounce their superstitions, and not to fall into the sins they had repented of,— he preached to them the simple truths of the Gospel, and left directions that every father should see that his children be taught to say the Creed and the Lord's Prayer in the vulgar tongue.*

* Neander states that bishops in their visitations directed men to be scourged who were proved to be guilty of moral offences, the civil authorities conceding to them this power. Neander, v. 138.

This primary visitation was a tour of inspection, and Theodorus returned to Canterbury determined upon two points,—to establish the parochial system, and to increase the episcopate.

Hitherto the Church in England, whether we have regard to Celtic churches or to those connected with the Canterbury mission, after the expulsion of the British bishops, was simply a great station for missionary operations. Some interesting descriptions of the proceedings of the Celtic missionaries are given by Bede. Sometimes on horseback, but oftener on foot, the missionary would go forth from his monastery to the towns in the plain, whither the people would flock to hear the word and to receive the Sacraments. At other times he would be absent for whole weeks, having scaled the craggy mountain, and having penetrated the recesses occupied by the bandit and the outlaw, whom none but he would dare to approach, seeking to allure the wild people by his preaching and example to heavenly employments. By their disinterested conduct, by their refusing to receive presents, or even endowments for their religious establishments, except through the temporal authorities; by the kindness with which they attended the sick, — the favourable impression made through the discretion and zeal of the Celtic missionaries was such, that they were everywhere well received by their countrymen, and their blessing asked. At Bishop Colman's missionary residence a frugality was observed, the description of which throws some light on the customs of the age. The missionaries only required a few houses, besides the church; and in the church, when the houses were full from an unexpected return of the missionaries, they would, like Laurentius, direct the straw to be strewn for their beds. They were frequently visited by the wealthy; but only shared with them their simple fare, and made no extra provision for

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their entertainment; and if "the great men of the world," on departing, left them donations in money, it was spent in making provision for the poor. When the king came, as he occasionally did, he came considerately with only five or six servants, and having performed his devotions in the church, generally departed; or if he remained to take refreshment, he was quite contented with the plain and daily fare of the brethren, whose business it was to feed the soul and not the belly.*

But all the clergy were not engaged in missionary labour. From the migratory character of their courts, the princes were accustomed to select certain of the clergy to accompany them for the performance of the services of the church; and the thanes soon after followed the example, and appointed their private chaplains. On this foundation Theodorus erected his parochial system. He perceived that Christianity, if it were to be rooted in the land, required more than the occasional delivery of a sermon and the administration of the Sacraments: he recognised the superintending duties of a pastor, who should gather the sheep into one fold. In the Greek Church he had been familiar with the parochial system; and he determined to encourage the formation of parishes, and the erection of parish churches, by adopting the principle laid down by the Emperor Justinian, in the laws which he published in 541 and 543, according to which the right of patronage was conceded to the founders of churches and their heirs, provided that the church had a specific income for the maintenance of the minister. Theodorus persuaded the thanes and landed proprietors to assign to their former chaplains an independent position, and by placing a church in the centre of their estates, to secure a constant intercourse between the minister of the Gospel, the inmates

* Bede, iii. 26, iv. 27.

of the castle, and the serfs. The endowments consisted probably of grants of land, or fixed charges upon persons and property; but of tithes no mention is made in Bede, although the wealthy had long been accustomed to devote a tenth of their income to charitable objects or religious uses.*

In visiting Northumbria, the archbishop thought fit to exercise his metropolitan authority by deposing Ceadda or Chad, and replacing Wilfrid. It was a harsh proceeding, but was in accordance with a rule which Theodorus most unjustifiably laid down, that he would re-ordain any one who had received ordination from those among the Scottish or British bishops who did not conform to the Church of Canterbury in the matter of Easter or of the tonsure.† As the bishops by whom Chad had been consecrated were in communion with Canterbury, we presume that when Theodorus is said to have completed his ordination, he conferred upon him priest's orders, which he had received before he conformed. Chad was a good man, though a fanatic; and instead of resisting the wrong doing, he expressed himself perfectly willing to resign an office for which he felt himself unfit; he thus made way for Wilfrid. Theodorus, though a stern man, still showed that he had a tender heart; for he was so moved by the meekness of Chad, that he soon after obtained for him a nomination to the see of Lichfield, from Wulfhere, king of the Mercians.

* "Contulit itaque, aliorum episcoporum ac sanctorum patrum consensu, piissimus Theodorus facultatem, excitabat fidelium devotionem et voluntatem, in quarumlibet provinciarum civitatibus, necnon villis, ecclesias fabricandi, parochias distinguendi, assensus eisdem regios procurando, ut, si qui sufficientes essent, et ad Dei honorem pro voto haberent super proprium fundum ecclesias construere, earundem perpetuo patronatu gauderent. Si autem infra limites alicujus alterius dominii ecclesias facerent, ejusdem fundi notarentur domini pro patronis." — *Elmham*, 285, 286.

† See the Capitula et Fragmenta Theodori, Thorpe, 307.

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It was part of Theodorus' plan to introduce synodal action into the Church. His wish and design was to hold synods twice in every year. In this he appears not to have succeeded. But two important synods were held during his episcopate. The first, to which attention is now to be directed, was held on the 24th of September, 673, at Hertford. It was attended by all the leading bishops, Wilfrid, bishop of the Northumbrians*, being represented by his legates. We happen to have the archbishop's own report of this meeting:—"When we were assembled, and each in order were reseated, I said: 'I propose to you, dearly beloved brethren, for the fear and for the love of our Redeemer, that we confer together on what relates to the furtherance of our common faith; so that we may inviolably observe what things soever have been defined and decreed by the holy and reverend fathers of the Church.' Much more I said in reference to charity and unity; and then I put it to them, one by one, whether they would defer to whatever was decreed canonically and of old by the fathers. My brother bishops answered in the affirmative; and I then produced the Book of Canons†, and showed them the ten chapters which I had marked in several places, as being those of most importance to ourselves.

"1. That we should all celebrate Easter on the Sunday after the fourteenth day of the first month. 2. That no bishop should intrude into another's diocese. 3. That no bishop should disturb the monasteries, or seize their property. 4. That monks might not remove from one monastery to another without a *bene discessit* from their

* The missionary bishops did not in all instances receive their titles from the cities of their cathedrals. They are frequently described by Bede as bishops of districts.

† "Eundem librum canonum," the book which he had mentioned to his correspondent in some previous portion of his letter.

superiors. 5. That no clergyman shall leave his own bishop, or be received into another diocese without commendatory letters, under pain of excommunication against the offending clerk, and against the bishop to whom he has attached himself, if, on demand, he refuse to give him up. 6. That bishops and clergy, when travelling, be content with the hospitality offered them, and not presume to officiate without the licence of the bishop in whose diocese they may be. 7. It was proposed that a synod should be held twice every year; but so many difficulties presented themselves, that this was overruled: it was unanimously agreed that we should meet once a year, on the 1st of August, at Clofeshoch. 8. That no bishop, through ambition, should try to take precedence of another; but that each should observe the time and order of his consecration. 9. On the ninth canon there was a discussion, and it was agreed that as the number of the faithful increased, bishops should be multiplied; a point to which, up to the present time, we have not paid sufficient attention. 10. The tenth chapter related to marriages: that no marriages should be acknowledged as such but those which are made according to law; that no incestuous marriage be permitted; no divorce, except, as the Gospel teaches, for fornication; that if any one put away the wife to whom he has been legally married, if he wish to remain a Christian, he may not marry again,—he must either remain as he is, or be reconciled to his wife.

"To these chapters thus treated of in common and defined, it was thought fit that each one of us should subscribe with our own hands, to the end that no scandal might arise from any future controversy, or any mistake occur in their promulgation. And this our definitive judgment I directed Titillus, our notary, to engross. Done in the month and indiction aforesaid. Whosoever, therefore, shall in any way run counter to or infringe

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upon this canonical decision, confirmed by our consent, and subscribed by our hands, let him clearly understand that he is suspended from the episcopal office and from our communion. May we be preserved by the grace of God in the bond of peace and in the unity of the church."*

We cannot retire from the perusal of this document without contrasting the conduct of Theodorus with that of Augustine. Both had one object in view, to promote the unity of the Church of England; both had to confer with bishops jealous of any encroachment upon their rights; but when Augustine thought of himself, Theodorus thought only of the cause; Augustine laid down the law, Theodorus invited discussion; and although, after the discussion on the seventh chapter, and probably on the ninth, he was in a minority, he did not lose his temper, but, on a mere question of expediency, yielded with a good grace to the will of others.

Theodore had no intention to permit the ninth chapter to remain a dead letter; but he addressed his mind immediately to the division of the overgrown dioceses of Mercia and Northumbria. He had previously consecrated Leutherius, bishop of the West Saxons, and in 673 we find him consecrating Badwin to Elmham, and Ecci to Dunwich; he soon after constituted sees at Hereford and Worcester; to the first he translated Putta, and for the second he ordained Bosel; he consecrated Cuthwin about 680 to the diocese of Leicester, and Eadhed to Lindsey in 678. In Northumbria he consecrated Trumwin to Whithern in 681, Eata to Hexham in 678, and in 685 Cuthbert to Lindisfarne.†

* Bede, iv. 5.

† The dates of these several consecrations I obtain from the invaluable "Registrum Sacrum Anglicanum" of Mr. Stubbs, of which mention has been made in the Preface.

These arrangements were not made without opposition and difficulty. Winfrid, whom Theodorus had consecrated to the see of Lichfield in 672, was deposed in 675, in consequence, it is supposed, of opposing the alterations in his diocese; and of him we hear nothing more.

But in Northumbria the opposition of Wilfrid was of a serious character, and Theodorus would have been unable to carry his point if he had not been strongly supported by the civil authority, to which Wilfrid, with his usual want of judgment, had placed himself in opposition. It has been already stated that, one of the first acts of Theodorus on his coming to England was to restore Wilfrid to the see of York.* Wilfrid had immediately proceeded to act with characteristic munificence, and to indulge that taste for display, and the expensive habits which he had formed in Italy and France, and wished to import into his native land. He found his cathedral dilapidated, and he restored it. The thatched roof he covered with lead, the windows hitherto open to the weather he filled with glass, and such glass, says Eddius, as permitted the sun to shine within.† The Gregorian chant, introduced by Jacob the deacon, was performed to perfection by the choir of Wilfrid. Other sacred edifices he erected, restored, or adorned. By the piety of the Northumbrian abbots, abbesses, and thanes, he was enabled to accomplish this, and his coffers overflowed. An enthusiasm was created in his favour; old men made him their heir, and parents confided their children

* York, notwithstanding the assertion of Eddius, does not appear to have been made a metropolitan see when reconstituted after the expulsion of Paulinus. The kings of Northumbria and Kent, together with the other kings of the Heptarchy, had determined to place all the churches of England under one metropolitan, the Archbishop of Canterbury.

† Eddius, 16.

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to him for education. By his profuse expenditure and his popular manners his influence was increased. His retinue became princely, both in number and apparel, and he assumed an almost royal state. Then a reaction commenced; men began to think that their large donations for pious uses might be better employed than in the excesses of Saxon revels. The king complained, that by the legacies through which Wilfrid was enriched, the crown was impoverished; for property left to the Church was permitted to pass without payment of the king's heriots; the price of the best horse, the best suit of armour, and the sum of gold which accrued to the king under ordinary circumstances, on the death of an ealdorman or thane, was not deducted when the property was devised to Wilfrid. Wilfrid's splendour, his large housekeeping, his monasteries, rising like so many palaces around him, his army of followers, were not unnoticed by Irminburga, the queen, whose object it was to fan the flames of that anger against Wilfrid which was already kindled in her husband's mind.

Ecgfrid, king of Northumbria, had taken for his first wife Etheldreda, a lady whose fanaticism had in it a tinge of insanity. In defiance of Scripture, of decency, and of common sense, she repudiated her marriage vow, and, encouraged in her folly by the less excusable folly, if not worse, of Wilfrid, she determined to separate from her husband and become a nun. Ecgfrid, with whom the Archbishop of Canterbury agreed, regarded this separation in the light of a divorce, and married again. For some reason or other Wilfrid opposed the second marriage, and increased the dislike of the queen and the court.

This was the state of affairs when the Archbishop of Canterbury proposed to divide the diocese of Northumbria. To the proposal Wilfrid had nothing to oppose on ecclesiastical grounds; but must have admitted that in a

spiritual point of view it was highly desirable. But the Bishop of York could not afford to diminish his splendour; and like most men, was unwilling to relinquish the power he possessed, while a regard to vested interests was a thing which never occurred to the mind of the stern Archbishop. Wilfrid opposed the archbishop, and Theodorus, backed by the court, uttered sentence of deposition upon him, and in the year 678 consecrated Bosa bishop of York.*

The indignant Wilfrid embarked for the Continent, and appealed to Rome, whither he repaired. This was a direct violation of the Church principles of the age; for the patriarch of Rome had jurisdiction only where both parties agreed to refer the cause to him. To appeal from a national English synod,—from an English king and an English metropolitan,—was not to be tolerated by the free spirit which pervaded the land. And consequently, when Wilfrid returned with the papal decision in his favour, and, on the strength of it, demanded to be restored to his diocese, the king convened a council of the nobility and clergy of his kingdom, and by the clergy and the laity then assembled it was unanimously determined that the appeal was a public offence, and the papal letters an insult to the crown and nation. Wilfrid was condemned to nine months' imprisonment, and became for many years a wandering outcast. 680.

By the Archbishop of Canterbury the papal mandate was equally disregarded, although the decree for reinstating Wilfrid declared that "all persons, *whoever they might be*, who should attempt to infringe that decree, should be smitten with an everlasting anathema." † The

* Eddius, 24.

† Eddius, 31. The conduct of the archbishop is the more remarkable, as he had so far condescended as to employ an agent at Rome to explain to the Roman Court the real state of affairs.

CHAP. IV. Theodorus. 680.

threatened excommunication did not come: the truth is, that the Bishop of Rome did not feel strong enough to try his power in a remote province, when he was fighting his battle nearer home. The attempts of the Roman court, to establish the spiritual supremacy of Rome in the West, were not at this time encouraged by the Byzantine government. An attempt to exercise undue authority, on the part of the Roman bishop, had, when Theodorus was in that city, been resisted by Maurus, archbishop of Ravenna. And when Vitalian hurled his excommunication against him, Maurus threw back his excommunication against Vitalian.*

Theodorus received therefore in perfect composure the unaccomplished threat, and was equally regardless of the Pope's wish, that he should attend as one of his representatives at the Council of Constantinople.† There are various reasons easy to be assigned why the archbishop should not leave his diocese and province, and at his age take a long journey, from which he might not live to return. But we have already produced reasons sufficient to show that it was expedient, when a council was held to condemn the Monothelite heresy and thus by implication to condemn both the Ecthesis and the Type, that Theodorus should remove all doubts as to his own opinion upon the subject.

We are thus able to account for what at first appears unaccountable, that the Archbishop of Canterbury should convene a council here in England, for the express purpose of declaring the orthodoxy of the Church of England, on a subject so little connected with local interests or insular controversies. Theodorus was extremely careful to have committed to writing what was enacted by the authority of the synod, and was evidently aware that a spy upon his actions was present, his conduct with

* Milman, bk. iv. c. vi. † Mansi, xi. 286.

respect to Wilfrid, and his refusal to attend a council at Constantinople having awakened suspicion at Rome. John, called the singer, the precentor, or archchanter of St. Peter's, had come to England at the invitation of Benedict Biscop, who had adopted in his monastery the Roman liturgy instead of the Gallican, which still prevailed in the north of England, and required some one to instruct his people in the order and manner both of singing and of reading aloud. But while this was the pretext, or rather in combination with this object, the main purpose of John the chanter was, to ascertain for the authorities of Rome the condition and the tone of feeling in the Church of England.

As the proceedings of this synod were taken down in writing, by order of the Archbishop, in the year 680, the document in which the account is given, and which was transcribed by Bede, is extremely valuable. It shows what were regarded as the essentials of the Christian faith at the time, and it is therefore presented to the reader.

"'In the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in the tenth year of the reign of our most pious lord, Ecgfrid, king of the Northumbrians, the fifteenth of the kalends of October (17th September), the eighth indiction; and in the sixth year of the reign of Aedilred, king of the Mercians; in the seventeenth year of the reign of Alduulf, of the East Angles; in the seventh year of the reign of Hlothari, king of Kent; Theodorus, by the grace of God, Archbishop of the island of Britain and of the city of Canterbury, being president, and the other venerable bishops of the island of Britain sitting with him, the holy Gospels being laid before them, in the place which in the Saxon tongue is called Haethfelth; we conferred together, and expounded the true and orthodox faith, as our Lord Jesus in the flesh delivered the same to His disciples, who

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saw His bodily presence and heard His words, and as it is delivered in the creed of the Holy Fathers, and by all holy and universal synods in general, and by the consent of all approved doctors of the Catholic Church: we, therefore, following them reverently and orthodoxly, and professing accordance to their divinely inspired doctrine, do believe, and do, according to the Holy Fathers, firmly confess, properly and truly, the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, a Trinity consubstantial in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, that is, one God in three consubstantial Subsistences or Persons, of equal glory and honour.'

"And after more to the same effect, appertaining to the confession of the true faith, this holy synod added to its letters: — 'We have received the five holy and general councils of the blessed fathers acceptable to God; that is, of the 318 bishops, who were assembled at Nice, against the most impious Arius and his tenets; and that at Constantinople of the 150, against the madness of Macedonius and Eudoxius and their tenets; and that first at Ephesus of the 200, against the most wicked Nestorius and his tenets; and that at Chalcedon of 630, against Eutyches and Nestorius and their tenets; and again at Constantinople, in a fifth council, in the reign of Justinian the Younger, against Theodorus and the Epistles of Theodoret and Ibas, and their tenets, against Cyril.'

"And again, a little after:— 'The synod held in the city of Rome, in the time of the most blessed Pope Martin, in the eighth indiction, in the ninth year of the most pious Emperor Constantine, we have received, and we glorify our Lord Jesus Christ, as they glorified Him, neither adding nor diminishing anything, and we anathematise those with heart and mouth whom they anathematised, and we have received those whom they received, glorifying God the Father, who is without beginning, and His only-begotten Son, begotten of the Father before the worlds,

and the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son in an ineffable manner, as those holy apostles, prophets, and doctors, whom we have above mentioned did declare. And all we, who with Archbishop Theodorus have thus expounded the Catholic faith, have also subscribed thereto.' " * CHAP. IV. Theodorus. 680.

II. We may now pass on to the consideration of another great work achieved by Theodorus, who had the honour of laying the foundation of English scholarship. To this point he directed his attention immediately after his arrival in England. He took possession of St. Augustine's monastery, and made it a school of learning. Hadrian was detained for two years in France; but that there might be no delay, the archbishop persuaded Benedict Biscop to defer his journey to the north, and that learned man presided *ad interim* over the new university.

In Hadrian Theodorus found an able coadjutor. He is described by William of Malmesbury as "a fountain of letters and a river of arts."† Both these great men understood the importance of creating a learned clergy; they regarded civilisation as the handmaid of Christianity, and of civilisation they knew that learning is the parent. They found the English people eager to be instructed and appetent of knowledge. They gathered around them a crowd of disciples, and, as Bede says, there daily flowed from them streams of knowledge to water the hearts of their hearers. Through their influence all the larger and better monasteries were converted into schools of learning, in which the laity as well as the clergy imbibed a respect for literature, and in many instances a love of it. Even the monasteries belonging to the fair sex were converted into seminaries of learning, and the Abbess Hildelidis and her

* Bede, iv. 17.

† Quoted by Wright, Biog. Brit. Lit. i. 31.

CHAP. IV. Theodorus. 671.

nuns were, in the next generation, able to understand the Græcisms of Aldhelm in his Latin treatise, "De Laudibus Virginitatis," written for their especial edification. In the time of Bede, as the historian himself informs us, there were scholars of Theodorus and Hadrian who were as well versed in the Greek and Latin languages as in their own.* When literature was almost extinguished in France, Alcuin could boast of the learned men and the noble libraries of England. So indefatigable were the transcribers of ancient manuscripts in these English schools, that from them Charlemagne himself solicited assistance, when he laboured for the revival of letters in Gaul.† The library to which Alcuin was indebted was that of York, of which he gives the following account: —

"Illic invenies veterum vestigia Patrum,
Quidquid habet pro se Latio Romanus in orbe,
Græcia vel quidquid transmisit clara Latinis;
Hebraicus vel quod populus bibit imbre superno,
Africa lucifluo vel quidquid lumine sparsit.
Quod pater Hieronymus, quod sensit Hilarius, atque
Ambrosius præsul, simul Augustinus, et ipse
Sanctus Athanasius, quod Orosius edit avitus,
Quidquid Gregorius summus docet, et Leo Papa;
Basilius quidquid, Fulgentius atque coruscant,
Cassiodorus item, Chrysostomus atque Joannes.
Quidquid et Althelmus docuit, quid Beda Magister,
Quæ Victorinus scripsere, Boetius, atque
Historici veteres, Pompeius, Plinius, ipse
Acer Aristoteles, rhetor quoque Tullius ingens:
Quid quoque Sedulius, vel quid canit ipse Juvencus,
Alcuinus et Clemens, Prosper, Paulinus, Arator,
Quid Fortunatus vel quid Lactantius edunt.
Quæ Maro Virgilius, Statius, Lucanus, et auctor
Artis grammaticæ, vel quid scripsere magistri:

* Bede, iv. 2.

† Alc. op. i. 52, 53. Hallam remarks that our best age was precisely the worst in France.

Quid Probus atque Phocas, Donatus, Priscianusve,
Servius, Euticius, Pompeius, Comminianus.
Invenies alios perplures." *

Of the library attached to St. Augustine's, Canterbury, we are enabled to present the reader with an account from Thomas of Elmham's history of that monastery, which has lately been published under the auspices of Sir John Romilly, Master of the Rolls. The date is 1414.

"One of the most important books in the library is 'Gregory's Bible' in two volumes, the first of which has the rubric on its first leaf, 'De Capitulis Libri Geneseos;' the second commences with the 'Prologus beati Ieronymi super Ysaiam prophetam.' In the beginning of these volumes there are various leaves inserted; some of a purple, others of a rose-colour, which, held against the light, show a wonderful reflexion.

"There is also, in the same library, the 'Psalter of Augustine' which Gregory sent to him, at the beginning of which are some devout 'Meditations,' with the notes "Ecce quantum spatiatus sum in memoria mea,' &c., to the fifth leaf, where it begins, 'Omnis scriptura divinitus inspirata;' and in the other part of the same leaf is the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the 'Glory to God in the highest,' and 'Holy, Holy, Holy,' &c. On the sixth leaf the Psalter commences, and at the end of the Psalter are 'Hymns' both for night and day. The first hymn for midnight is this, 'The hour of midnight is;' the second, at cockcrowing, 'Eternal maker of all things;' at matins, 'Brightness of the Father's glory;' at prime, 'Come, brothers, quicker;' at the third hour, 'Now begins the third hour;' at the sixth, 'Six hours unfolding;' at the ninth, 'The thrice third hour is rolled along;' at

* Alc. de Pont. et Sanc. Ebor. Eccl. 1536—1557. Gale, 730.

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vespers, 'God, Creator of all;' at compline, 'We pray thee, Lord;' in Lent, 'O Christ who art both light and day;' hymn for the Lord's Day, 'O King, eternal Lord;' for Christmas day, 'Hear, O thou Shepherd of Israel;' and then, for the same occasion, 'Come, Redeemer of the nations,' to the end; hymn for Easter Day, 'This is God's true day;' on the feast of the apostles Peter and Paul, 'The Apostles' passion;' on that of St. John the Evangelist, 'Noble in the love of Christ.'

"In the vestry there is also the 'Text of the Gospels,' at the beginning of which are the ten canons. It is also called the 'Text of St. Mildred;' because a countryman in Thanet, swearing falsely thereupon, is said to have lost his eyes.

"There is also another Psalter, placed on the table of the high altar, having on its exterior the figure of Christ in silver, with the four Evangelists. The first leaf of this Psalter commences, 'All Scripture divinely inspired;' the third begins with the 'Epistle of Pope Damasus to Jerome,' and has the verses of Damasus at the end; next, the 'Epistle of Jerome to Damasus,' with Jerome's verses; then, on the fourth leaf, 'Of the origin of the Psalms,' at the end of which is the Psalter, divided into five books. The first book concludes with the 40th Psalm, viz. 'Blessed is he who understandeth,' ending 'So be it, So be it;' the second with the 71st Psalm, viz. 'O God, thy judgment,' ending 'So be it, So be it;' the third with the 88th Psalm, viz. 'The mercies of the Lord,' ending 'So be it, So be it;' the fourth with the 105th Psalm, 'Confess ye,' ending 'So be it, So be it;' the fifth with the 150th Psalm, viz. 'O praise the Lord from heaven,' ending 'Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.' In the fifth leaf of this Psalter follows an explanation of 'Alleluia,' according to the Hebrews, Chaldæans, Syrians, and Latins. Also, an interpretation of the 'Glory,' according to the

Chaldæans; also, an interpretation of the 119th Psalm, through the several letters. On the sixth leaf follows, when they ought to be sung or read, according to Jerome's prescription, with the 'Order of the Psalms, through A. B. C. D.' On the seventh leaf, of the Hebrew letters, which are written in the Psalter. On the eighth leaf, the 'Interpretation of the Psalms' to the eleventh leaf, where the 'Text of the Psalter' begins, with the figure of Samuel the priest, and at the end of the Psalter are hymns for matins and vespers, and the Lord's Day, as has been previously noticed in the other Psalter.

"In the library there is also another text of the Gospels, to which the ten canons are prefixed, with a prologue commencing thus: 'Prologue of the Canons.' And upon the table of the high altar, there is placed a book with a figure of Christ in silver, erect, and blessing with his right hand, in which is contained 'The conflict of the Apostles Peter and Paul with Simon Magus, and their Passions. Also, the Passion of St. Andrew the Apostle. Also, the Passion of St. James, the Passion of St. Thomas the Apostle, the Passion of St. Bartholomew the Apostle, the Passion of St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist, the Passion of the Apostles St. Simon and St. Jude, the life of St. John, Apostle and Evangelist.'

"There is also another book placed on the same table of the high altar, having on the exterior a representation of the rays of the Divine Majesty, in silver gilt, set round with crystals and beryls; in this is contained "The Passionary of the Saints," beginning with St. Apollinaris and ending with the passion of the holy martyrs, Simplicius, Faustinus, and Beatrice.

"Also on the same table of the high altar is placed a book which has on its cover a single large beryl in the middle, set round on all sides with crystals, in which is contained an Exposition of the Epistles and Gospels from

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the third Sunday after the octaves of Easter to the fourth Sunday after the octaves of Whitsuntide. And these are the first-fruits of the books of the whole Anglican Church."*

Of these manuscripts all have long since disappeared, with two exceptions. The two MSS. Gospels are still shown at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and in the Bodleian at Oxford.

III. To Theodorus as an author a very high position is to be assigned. His Penitential is a wonderful work. It is not quite true, as some have asserted, that it was the first work of the kind which appeared; for he must himself have been acquainted with the Penitential Law Book, published by John the Faster, the opponent of Gregory the Great. But his was the first work of the kind which was published by authority in the Western Church; and he did his work so well, that it was the foundation on which all the other "libelli pœnitentiales" rested, such as those which were published by Bede and Egbert. The system which it adopts prevailed, through his influence, in England long before it obtained currency in other parts of Europe.†

That his whole system of ethics was erroneous, and that, in its development, it defeated the very end which the pious writer had in view, we who live after the experiment has been made and failed, can very easily perceive, and yet such an experiment the exigencies of the time seemed to demand. When Christianity had to deal almost exclusively with pagans, the subject of sanctification took precedence of the great doctrine of justification, which was urged in

* Hist. Monasterii S. Augustini Cant. p. 96.

† Gieseler, ii. 194. The Penitential of Theodorus has been published by Thorpe in his "Ancient Laws and Institutes." Cummianus's Penitential preceded that of Theodorus, as Cummianus died in 640. I am not able to say whether Theodorus was in any way indebted to his predecessor in the Western Church.

times past to humble the proud heart of the Jew, and is still urged upon those who, educated among the decencies of civilised life, are too apt to forget how far the natural man has gone from righteousness. The preachers spoke to the pagans, when they were willing to hear the word of life, of that change of heart without which it is impossible to enjoy the heaven which has been opened to us by the merits of the Lamb of God. But of a new heart, a new life must be the result. There must be strict moral conduct, or religion becomes mere sentimentality and romance. This was soon understood, and in the first fervours of a conversion, all went well. But the very ease with which the conversions were effected among the Teutonic races shows how rapidly the mind could rush from one extreme to the other. Apostacy was often as sudden: then repentance: then enthusiastic re-conversion. When men had been brought up, as the pagans were, without any moral restraint, freely giving way to every passion, sometimes romantically generous, and at other times diabolically cruel, the difficulty must indeed have been great to bring them under the discipline of religion, and to habituate them to a consistent observance of the great principles of the Gospel. There was a constant alternation of sinning and repenting, of repenting and sinning. What was to be done? Was the sinner never to be forgiven? Was the penitent to be utterly rejected? If this was not to be the case, was he to be permitted to persist in his inconsistencies, and thus to bring scandal upon his Christian profession? These were the practical questions which presented themselves to the rulers of the Church, who watched for souls as they that must give an account; and this was the difficulty which the Penitential of Theodorus, a formulary in perfect accordance with the spirit of the age, was designed to meet. In civil affairs a man was not for every offence cut off from the

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community; but still for every offence a penalty was to be paid or punishment exacted. And this was the principle, a principle already introduced into the state, which Theodorus enforced with severity, if not with harshness.

It is easy to perceive how this system could be perverted and abused. The "jurisdictio fori intimi," thus established, extended from the action to the motive; and as the minister of religion was to judge of the motive before assigning the punishment, all the exaggerating and extenuating circumstances of each crime were to be taken into consideration and previously weighed: the ingenuity and casuistic skill displayed on this subject by Theodorus evince the subtlety as well as the force of his mind.

But a judgment on these the inner workings of the soul could not be formed, or the exact amount of punishment for each offence previously fixed, unless the penitent made a clean breast and a full confession. It is very true that Theodorus did not take the sacramental view of confession; he did not think the absolution of the priest necessary; he asserted that confession to God only was sufficient* to obtain pardon; but still his whole system led to that practice which, in after times, was productive of evil.

Then, again, in the administration of justice, the Saxons had been accustomed to payment of fines in money, so that by the payment of a certain sum to the person who had been defrauded, or to the relations of a person who had been murdered, a thief or a murderer might escape from the punishment which, except for the fine, would have been inflicted. The Saxon laws are full of regulations relating to the wer-gild. There was a legal valuation of each individual, varying according to his situation in life. This system Theodorus unfortunately applied to things

* Laws and Institutes, p. 319.

spiritual, and, by the extreme severity of his code, it was almost immediately brought into operation. He was an ecclesiastical Draco. For false testimony a penance of five years was enjoined; for receiving stolen goods, or rather, as marking the kind of theft most common, for eating meat which a man knew to be stolen, the punishment was, to abstain from animal food for two years; the envious man was to be under penance, that is, to live on bread and water, for three years.

A mitigation of these penalties soon became a necessity; and since a pecuniary mulct was permitted, a commutation of penance passed from the exception to the rule. At first this seemed to work well. Casuists taking for their text, Dan. iv. 27, "Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor," permitted men to purchase a relaxation of the punishment due to their offences, by their alms-deeds, and by their contributions to charitable works and objects. Fines were levied that could only be paid by self-denial on the part of the rich; and through the money paid the poor were relieved, the fatherless and widows supported, roads were improved, bridges built, slaves set free, fires, baths, and beds provided for the sick, churches endowed, and religious houses established. But, as we shall have too many opportunities to consider and lament, the abuse of a system which, originally based on a wrong principle, easily and speedily resulted in laxity and indulgence.

But it would be too much to expect any man to foresee the evil consequences, which might possibly result from a remedy which he prescribes to meet an existing evil. The physician who prescribes laudanum to relieve his patient during a crisis of his disease, is not to be blamed for not foreseeing that, when relieved from his present complaint, he will repeat the dose and become an opium eater. Instead of encouraging the pride of our hearts,

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because we perceive, in the effects produced, the evil of enforcing the discipline of the Church too strictly, let us rather bear in mind that the extreme opposite to wrong is not of necessity right, and let us believe it to be possible that the entire disregard of all ecclesiastical discipline which now prevails, the violation of every principle, and the defiance of every restraint of the Church, which are justified by every one who imagines that he, through his latitudinarianism, may become useful and do good, may possibly lead to a rejection of all law, from whatever quarter it may emanate, and plunge society once more, through lawlessness, into barbarism. At all events, let us not be harsh in the condemnation of our ancestors, if we would escape the severe judgment of posterity. With the same judgment that we judge it will be meted to ourselves.

686. The career of the octogenarian was now drawing to a close, and most of what Theodorus had designed to effect he lived to see accomplished. The metropolitan authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury was universally acknowledged; the larger dioceses had been divided; parishes were settled; parochial churches erected; moral discipline was enforced; a broad foundation for learning laid, while the state of the country is thus described by Bede, nearly a contemporary: "Happier times than these never were since the English came into Britain; for their kings were brave men and good Christians, and while, by the terror of their arms, the barbarians were kept in check, the minds of men were bent upon the joys of the heavenly kingdom which had just been revealed to them; and every one who desired instruction in the sacred Scriptures had masters at hand to instruct him."*

Before his death, Theodorus sought to be reconciled to

* Bede, iv. 2.

Wilfrid. The partisans of Wilfrid had been unmeasured in their abuse of the archbishop. They spoke of him as a schismatic. They compared him to Balaam, insinuating that as Balaam received gifts from Balak, so Theodorus had been bribed by Ecgfrid to depose Bishop Wilfrid.* Other expressions equally uncomplimentary were adopted; but as Theodorus was not to be driven by threats from the plain line of duty, so neither could insults obliterate the charity which ruled his heart. Wilfrid was always seen to advantage under the pressure of external affliction or difficulty. When deposed from his diocese and driven from Northumbria, he found employment for his active and zealous mind in the conversion of Sussex, the only kingdom of the Heptarchy which, up to this time, adhered to its paganism. This county, the downs of which are now luxuriant sheepwalks, and the plains filled with corn, was in the days of Theodorus almost unapproachable †; but what offered an impediment to others was only provocative of zeal in Wilfrid. He succeeded in converting and in partly civilising the people ‡, and he himself in his exile became bishop of the new see which he created.§

* Eddius, 24.

† "Tunc vero gentis nostræ quædam provincia gentilis usque ad illud tempus perseverans vixit, quæ pro rupium multitudine et silvarum densitate, aliis provinciis inexpugnabilis extitit."—*Eddius*, 40.

‡ He is said to have taught the people the art of fishing; what he probably did was to persuade them to eat fish, which some among the pagans supposed to be unlawful. Eels were always an exception.

§ Ethelwalch granted to Wilfrid, and Cadwalla afterwards continued the grant of, the peninsula, as it then was, of Selsey. Here he erected a cathedral, and established a chapter of secular canons. The cathedral was removed to Chichester in the reign of William the Conqueror, and statutes were delivered to the chapter in the reign of Henry II., which, amended by subsequent enactments, provided for in the original constitution, are still the statutes of the Cathedral Church of Chichester, over which the writer of this volume has the happiness to preside.

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Such a man deserved the esteem of the archbishop, whatever his faults and extravagancies may, in former times, have been; and through Erkenwald, bishop of London, a meeting between the two prelates was effected.

The partisans of Wilfrid, whose assertions are not deserving of much credit, would represent the object of the archbishop to have been to express his regret for his past conduct towards Wilfrid, and to ask his forgiveness, which, according to their showing, was not very graciously conceded. But if this were the archbishop's object, we must conclude that, being now nearly ninety years of age, he must have been in his dotage, for he had nothing to regret. What he had done, he must, under the circumstances, have done again, or he would not have been that firm and righteous governor of the Church which all his actions prove him to have been. They also say that another object was to persuade Wilfrid to become his successor in the see of Canterbury; this is contradicted by the fact that archbishop of Canterbury Wilfrid never became.*

Theodorus was a prelate more powerful than Augustine, and with the example of Augustine before him, he would doubtless have nominated Wilfrid to be his successor, and have appointed him at once his coadjutor, had he thought Wilfrid to be the man fitted for a post, for which was requisite not only energy, which Wilfrid possessed, but also that sound judgment in which he was lamentably deficient. The wish of Theodorus would have been law to the king. The result of the interview actually was the restoration of Wilfrid to the see of York, and we may believe that this was done at the intercession of Theodorus. Without regretting his own wise and firm conduct when Wilfrid was contumacious and appealed to

* Eddius, 42.

a foreign court against the decision of an English Witenagemot and synod, Theodorus may have thought that the punishment, though deserved, of one who, under disgrace, had acted such a noble part, might, without violation of justice, be remitted, and that the Bishop of Selsey fairly merited a restoration to the see of York.

Theodorus died on the 19th of September, 690, and was buried by the side of his predecessors in the porch of St. Augustine's.

The Saxon Chronicle notices his death under the year 690, with the brief remark,—"Before this the bishops had been Romans; from this time they were English:" in other words, this great man converted what had been a missionary station into an Established Church.

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THEODORUS TO CEOLNOTH.

Brihtwald. — Aliases common to the Anglo-Saxon Prelates. — Abbot of Reculver.— Appointed to Canterbury.— Consecrated in France.— Settlement of Easter Question.—Aldhelm. Desire of Repose.—Love of Piety. — Pilgrimages to Rome.— Anecdote of King Ina. — Observance of the Lord's Day.—Pagan Superstitions.—Deposition of Ministers.—Slavery.— Letter of the Archbishop.—Missionary Zeal.—Controversy with Wilfrid. —Weakness of the Archbishop.—State of the Church abroad.—State of the Church of England. *Tatwine.*—State of Learning.—System of Education.—Questions in Arithmetic.—Science.—Medicine.—Latin Verses.— Tatwine's Enigmata. — State of Church. *Nothelm.* — Field Sports. — Harriers.—Transcription of MSS.—Character of Anglo-Saxon MSS.— Recipe for Illuminations in Gold. —Visit to Rome.—Disputes between Emperors and the Popes.—Assisted Bede.—Arch-Presbyter of St. Paul's. —Elected to Canterbury. — Letter of Boniface. — Agitation in favour of converting the Bishop of York into a Metropolitan.—Not opposed by Nothelm. — Pallium sought for York.— List of Works. *Cuthbert.* — Intimacy between Cuthbert and King Ethelbald.—Bishop of Hereford.— Translated to Canterbury.—Went to Rome.—Pope Zachary.—Boniface's Letter to the King.—Letter to the Archbishop. — Synod of Clovesho.— King of Mercia, President.—Attempt to bring the Church of England to acknowledge Supremacy of the Pope fails.— Pope Stephen in France.— Cuthbert on the Death of Boniface.— Controversy about his Burial.— Messenger to Germany. *Bregwin.*—A German by birth. — Osbern and Eadmer. — His Merits. — Consecration. — Description of his Death.— Controversy about his Burial. *Jaenberht.*—Controversy with Lichfield.— Social position of Archbishops of Canterbury.—Ambition of Jaenberht.— Offa converted Lichfield into a Metropolitan See.—He encourages Legates from Rome.—Witan of Mercia sanctioned the formation of a Metropolitan See at Lichfield.—Dies in St. Augustine's Monastery. *Ethelhard.*—Nominates Legates to the Council of Frankfort.— Iconoclastic Controversy.— Caroline Books.— Council of Frankfort. — Eadbert Pren.— Rebuked by Alcuin. — His Unpopularity. — Controversy with Lichfield concluded. — Primacy of Canterbury established.—Ethelhard called Pontifex or Pontiff. *Wulfred.*— Twelve Bishops at his Consecration.— Pope Leo III. — His

Misconduct.—Refused by King Kenulf.—Decay of Piety.—Prospects of the Country.—Sources of Wealth.—Demand for Monastic Reform.—Egbert—Tendency to Amalgamation of Kingdoms.—Synod of Cealchythe. *Feologeld.*—*Ceolnoth.*—First Dean of Canterbury.—Institution of Canons in Cathedrals.—Chrodegang—His Regulations.—Tithes not granted to Parochial Clergy exclusively.—Danes at Sheppey.—Ceolnoth's Merit.—Danes bought off.—Athelstan.—Witenagemot at Kingston.—Alstan.—Swithin.—Want of Energy in the Archbishop.—Alfred.—Danes on the Continent.—Progress of Papal Power.

BRIHTWALD.*

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In commencing the history of the eighth archbishop of Canterbury, the first difficulty is to decide upon the orthography of his name; like many of the Anglo-Saxon prelates, he rejoiced in a multitude of aliases, which, to assist the student, who may be inclined to consult the ancient chroniclers, shall be given in a note.†

Brihtwald was of royal birth, being nearly related to Ethelred, the Mercian king‡, and it is interesting to contemplate a descendant of Woden among the successors of the apostles. He was born in the middle of the seventh century, but of the place of his birth no mention is made. It is said that he was educated at Glastonbury, but this is doubtful. It is only known that upon the place of his education he reflected honour; for Bede, while speaking

* Authorities:—Brompton; Bede; Gervase; Chron. Mailros; Eddius; Simeon of Durham; Henry of Huntingdon; William of Malmesbury; Roger Hoveden; Wright, Biog. Lit.; Kemble, Saxons in England; Thorpe, Ancient Laws and Institutes.

† Brectwaldus, Hoveden; Britwold, Huntingdon; Brithwoldus, Brompton; Brichtwaldus, Diceto; Berthwaldus, Simeon of Durham; Berechtwaldus and Bertwaldus, Bede; Birctualdus, Malmesbury; Brihtwaldus, Florence of Worcester; Berchtwald, Chron. Mailros and S. Cruc.; Brithewaldus, Matthew Paris; Bricwaldus, Birchington. See Richardson's note on Godwin.

‡ Malmesb., Gesta Regum, i. 29.

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of his inferiority to his predecessor, admits that he was deeply read in Scripture.*

In the year 669 the royal palace at Reculver was converted into a monastery, intended, probably, for the education of young men of rank, and Brihtwald was appointed to preside over it as the abbot before the year 679, when his name appears in a grant to the monastery, of which the original charter is still preserved.† His high birth and his attainments as a scriptural scholar recommended him to the situation.

The see of Canterbury was vacant for two years after the death of Theodorus. It is probable that Wilfrid ‡ was intriguing for the appointment, and that the nomination of Brihtwald, an unexceptionable rather than a distinguished character, was a compromise.

As there was no metropolitan in England, he went to France for consecration. He might indeed have been consecrated by his suffragans, but in that case it would have devolved upon Wilfrid, now restored to the see of York, to have officiated, and to have placed the opponent of Theodorus in such a situation would have been manifestly inexpedient, and to the English hierarchy in general, offensive. He was elected on the 1st of July, 692, but was not consecrated before the 29th of June, in the year following.

The tendency to union and reconciliation was soon evinced by the number of Celtic bishops, both in the

* Bede, v. 8.

† Bede, v. 8. A charter is yet extant, granted by Hlothair of Kent to Abbot Berctuald, of lands in Thanet, dated at Raculf, in May, 679. See Kemble's Codex Diplomaticus, No. 16. Wright informs us, i. 243, that the charter is preserved among the Cottonian MSS., Aug. ii. 2.

‡ I infer this from the account which Eddius gives of the last interview between Theodorus and Wilfrid.

north of Britain and in Ireland, who expressed their readiness to yield on the great Easter question. A similar inclination was manifested in some portions of the Welsh Church. In Cornwall the bishops retained the old British usage, and they were met by the Archbishop of Canterbury in a truly Christian spirit; not with the insolence of Augustine, or even with the diplomacy of Theodorus. He employed the pen of his friend and kinsman Aldhelm.*

Aldhelm, who in 705 became Bishop of Sherborn, and thus the first in the long line of the bishops of Salisbury, was formed in the schools of Theodorus and Hadrian; he was the earliest Anglo-Saxon author who wrote in Latin. The spirit of the age is visible in Aldhelm, who, although he regarded the Celtic churches as schismatical, did nevertheless, in his letter to Gerunt, Prince of Cornwall, admit the orthodoxy with which they inculcated the precepts of the Gospel, and preached the mystery of our Lord's incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension; and he plainly asserted the great principle that schismatics are to be convinced not by force but by reason. After this, adroitly throwing the blame upon his opponents, he expresses his regret that there should be clergy beyond the Severn who, while glorying in the purity of their lives, "have such a contempt for our communion that they will unite with us neither in offices of public worship, nor in the exercises of private charity."†

In this age, as in every other age of the Church, the corruptions were many, and a tendency to superstition prevailed. But we have the most satisfactory proof of the real progress of vital Christianity in the wonderful

* Aldhelm was a scion of the illustrious family of West Saxon kings. Wright, Biog. Brit. Lit. i. 209.

† This letter is to be found among the Epistles of Boniface, No. 44. ed. Serar.

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change which took place in the whole state of society. War, which had formerly been the pastime of the great, and the chief employment of a people appetent of plunder, was now regarded as a cruel necessity, from the excitement of which kings and princes were eager to escape. A desire to enjoy the pleasures of retirement and the spiritual enthusiasm of the contemplative life became a passion. Nobles left their halls and the mead-bench, queens their palaces, and kings, the descendants of Woden, the pomp and circumstance of war, when the duties of their royal vocation could be performed by younger men, and the public welfare no longer demanded their services. By retirement, at that period of our history, was meant a monastic retreat; but we know from Bede, that it was not necessary for every one who, at this period, joined a monastery to bind himself by a vow to remain a monk for ever, or to seclude himself from society. He lived in a community, and pledged himself to adhere to the laws of the community, so long as he continued a member of it, these laws being in a few monasteries too severe, but in others so lax as to lead, at a later period, to many and great abuses.

To abuse there must be a tendency in all things human; society can never be exempt from the hypocrite and the fool. In our own age, the great principle prevalent is a love of the true: our single question relates not to the beautiful and the good, but to the true. And the evil tendency is on the one side to scepticism, and on the other to that fanaticism, which leads a man to regard as his enemy any one whose opinion does not accord with his own, while the infidel is confirmed in his rejection of the true, as he says, "See how these Christians hate." In the time of Brihtwald the prevalent feeling was a love of piety. Where piety existed, or was supposed to exist, folly in almost any shape was more than tolerated, it was some-

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times admired as a sign of Christian simplicity of character. The number of weak and silly persons who, for their very folly, were exalted into saints, is very remarkable, as may be easily seen in the "Acta Sanctorum." It was this that led to that legendary literature in which the age delighted —a record of imaginary piety. And it was this that led also to that esteem of dead men to whom all kinds of virtue were attributed, according to the caprice or the folly of friends, which terminated in hero-worship and the adoration of saints. At the time now under consideration, the feeling thus described induced men to undertake pilgrimages to Rome, where the mendacious Romans caused it to be believed that the apostles St. Paul and St. Peter were buried. Pilgrimage to Rome was now a fashion with the great; it soon became a rage among all classes of the people. An impulse was given to this feeling by the increase of learning. In the time of Theodorus and Hadrian, only a few learned men visited Rome, and returned laden with books and paintings; but now for books, paintings, works of art, and especially for relics, learned and unlearned were impatient to visit what was fast becoming in public estimation the sacred city.

Passing over the instances of retirement from the duties of a high station, after the honourable discharge of them in early life, as exhibited in the instances of Ethelred and Cenred, kings of Mercia, and of others who might be mentioned, we have in the history of Ina and his queen an example both of the piety and of the fanaticism of the age. The reader is referred to the History of England for an account of the glory of Ina's reign, and his devotion to the service of his country. We may judge of his character from the exordium to his code of laws, in which Christianity is recognised as the basis of civil and social relations. "I, Ina, through God's gift, King of the West Saxons, with the deliberation and advice of Cenred my

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father, and of Hedda and Ercenwald, my bishops *, and with all of the ealdormen and the most distinguished sages (witan) of my people, and a full attendance of God's ministers, was consulting for the health of our souls and the stability of our kingdom, that right and judgment should be established amongst our people, and that no ealdorman nor any of our subjects should infringe these our laws."†

He was a successful warrior, and in the struggles of war Ethelburga, his queen, a strong-minded woman, partook. No one can read his history without sympathising with Ina in his wish to retire from the incessant difficulties of his station, whenever he could do so with honour to himself and with safety to his people. He had to lament the excesses of his early life before the conversion of his heart, and his wife became fanatical in her desire to renounce the cares of royalty. Still the king wavered. Would he be right in following his inclination, strong as it was, and connected with what related to his own highest interests? The queen suspected that, in the hesitation of the king, she discovered a reluctance to give up the pleasures as well as the duties of royalty. Ina's taste was refined. He delighted in the splendour by which he was surrounded, and in all the particular appliances of luxury to meet the general discomfort which prevailed in the Saxon houses of the period. He had with his queen been regaling luxuriously in one of his palaces, if such we may style the residence of an Anglo-Saxon king, and thence was proceeding, as the custom was, to another station. Ethelburga, on their departure, directed the servants to defile the palace in every possible and most offensive manner:

* Bishops of Winchester and London.

† Ancient Laws and Institutes, 45.

the "wall clothes" or tapestry dipped in purple dye were besmeared with filth; the floor with the dung of cattle; upon the royal bed a sow was placed with her litter. When the royal pair had proceeded about a mile on their journey, Ethelburga persuaded the king to return to the home which he had left. On their arrival the king was naturally struck with astonishment and dismay at the scene which met his eye, when Ethelburga, taking for her text the circumstances she had created, began her sermon: "My noble spouse, where are now the revellings of yesterday? where the tapestry dipped in Sidonian dye? where the flattery of parasites? where the sculptured vessels bearing down the very tables with their weight of gold? where the delicacies so anxiously sought throughout sea and land to pamper the appetite? Are they not all gone like smoke and vapour? Woe to those who attach themselves to these things, for in like manner they shall pass away." The action and the comment of the queen had its effect, and if, in forsaking the companionship of his wife, Ina was not inconsolable, he must nevertheless have regarded her with feelings of respect. I dare not vouch for the truth of this story, which is given on the very questionable authority of William of Malmesbury*. But it shows what a chronicler believed to be probable, and thought would be accepted as truth by his readers, and it throws considerable light on the manners and modes of thought at that time prevalent.

During the episcopate of Brihtwald several Witenagemots and synods were held. The archbishop was present at the synod held by Wihtræd, King of Kent, at Beccanceld †, in which the king renewed and confirmed the liberties, privileges, and possessions of the Church in his

* Gesta Regum, i. 35.

† Probably Bapchild, near Sittingbourne.

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kingdom; and at another council held by the same king, at which were promulgated his dooms ecclesiastical, Brihtwald is described as "chief bishop of all Britain." He was not present when the laws ecclesiastical of King Ina were passed, but he was duly notified of the event.

These laws illustrate the character of the age.

The enactments with reference to the observance of the Lord's Day would satisfy a Puritan, and the observance was enforced with the greater strictness for the purpose of securing to the slave, at least one day of rest. In the ecclesiastical laws of King Ina, the third law enacts, "If a slave work on the Sunday by his lord's command, let him become a freeman, and let the lord pay thirty shillings for the mulct; but if the slave work without the lord's privity, let him forfeit his hide *, or a ransom for it. If a freeman work without his lord's command, let him forfeit his freedom or seventy shillings. Let a clergyman be liable to a double punishment." And in the same spirit, to encourage manumission, it is ruled in the 8th doom of Wihtræd, "If a man give freedom to a slave at the altar, let the family be free; let him take his liberty, have his goods and a wer-gild and protection for all that belong to his family."† Another merciful arrangement was the granting to churches the privilege of sanctuary, at a time when much latitude was permitted to private vengeance; it was wise to provide a shelter for innocence, where even crime might obtain at least a dispassionate investigation.

We find that the superstitions of heathenism were not

* "Let him forfeit his hide," *i.e.* let him be scourged. There is a law to the same effect in King Wihtræd's dooms ecclesiastical.

† The lord or master had the wer-gild due to the slave or any of his family, during servitude: upon manumission it became his own. Slaves were confined within the bounds of the manor to which they belonged. Freemen were under the king's protection when they travelled at discretion on the highway. Johnson, English Canons, i. 147.

entirely obliterated; as one of King Wihtræd's dooms ecclesiastical ordains, "If a husband, without knowledge of his wife, make an offering to a devil, let him incur the loss of all his possessions, and also the heals-fang."* We find that people were dilatory in bringing their infants to baptism, having sometimes, it is presumed, to travel a considerable distance, and a fine is imposed if a delay longer than of thirty days is permitted to take place: they appear likewise to have been rather backward in paying their church dues.

The impediments to ordination, and grounds for deposition of ministers, are thus stated:—

"The ordination of a bishop, priest, or deacon, shall be accounted valid, in case he prove clear of all grievous crimes; if he have not had a second wife, nor one deserted by her husband; if he never did public penance, and be not maimed in any part of his body; if he be not of a servile condition, and disengaged from all obligations of bearing civil offices; and if he be literate, such an one we choose to be promoted to the priesthood. It is unlawful to ordain any man on account of these blemishes; and for these we declare that those already promoted are to be deposed; that is, worshipping of idols, giving one's-self captive to the devil, being conjurors, diviners, enchanters, violating faith by false testimony, defiling one's-self with murder, fornication, committing thefts, violating the holy name by presumptuous perjury; and they ought not to obtain the favour of communion without public penance, nor to recover their former dignity (by doing penance), for it is not allowed by the Church that (public) penitents should minister sacred offices, as having formerly been vessels of vice."†

* Heals-fang probably means the pillory.

† Answers of Egbert, xv. Ancient Laws, 323.

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The reasons assigned for the observance of the four Ember weeks are also amusing, as being unreal and far-fetched: "Because the world consists of four quarters, east, west, south, and north; and man is compounded of four elements, fire, air, water, and earth; and the mind is governed by four virtues, prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice; and the four rivers of Paradise, as types of the four Gospels, water the whole earth; and the year turns on the four seasons, spring, summer, autumn, and winter; and this number, four, is on all hands acknowledged to be the number of perfection; therefore the old fathers instituted the four Ember weeks, according to God's law; as also holy men and apostolical doctors have done under the New Testament."*

We, at the present time, are accustomed to condemn malefactors to penal servitude, that is, to compulsory labour or slavery, for a definite period or for life. The Anglo-Saxons had a similar method of inflicting punishment; but with this terrible addition to the penalty, that the family and children of the offender shared his punishment and became hereditary bondsmen.† To this class were added the prisoners taken in war; the conqueror who spared their lives thought himself entitled to their property and their service. A large portion of the population was thus in a state of slavery, and at Bristol and Chester there was a slave market, where wretches existed who made merchandise of human beings. Of this iniquitous traffic, the clergy of the Anglo-Saxon Church, from Augustine to Stigand, were loud and incessant in their denunciations: and although they could not altogether eradicate the evil,

* Answers of Egbert, xvi. Ancient Laws, 324.

† The seventh of the laws of King Ina stands thus: "If any man steal so that his wife and children know it not, let him pay LX shillings as 'wite;' but if he steal with knowledge of all his household, let them all go into slavery."—*Ancient Laws*, 47.

they refused to hold slaves as a general rule, and they laboured in every possible way to soften the condition of their unfortunate fellow-creatures. The archbishop was not unmindful of his duty in this respect, as may be seen in all the enactments which passed during his occupancy of the see of Canterbury.

I am here able to give a private letter of the archbishop with reference to this subject, which reflects equal credit upon his head and his heart. The date is uncertain.*

"To his most reverend and venerable fellow-bishop, Forthere †, Brihtwald, the servant of the servants of God, sends greeting in the Lord: Since my request which I made in your presence to the venerable Abbot Beorwald ‡ to allow a captive girl to be ransomed, who is represented as having relations here, has turned out unavailing, contrary to my expectation, and they are again importunate in their entreaties, I have thought it most expedient to send this letter to you, by the girl's brother, named Eppa, in which I beg you, by any means, to prevail yourself on the aforesaid abbot to accept three hundred solidi for the said girl from the hand of the bearer, and deliver her to him to be brought hither, so that she may be able to pass the remainder of her life with her relations, not in the bitterness of slavery, but in the enjoyment of liberty. Your kindness in carrying out this matter will be rewarded by God, as well as repaid by my own thanks. Our brother Beorwald too, I imagine,

* Inter Epp. Bonifac. No. 58.

† Forthere was a friend of Bede, and Bishop of Sherborne. There is an account of him in Wright, Biog. Brit. Lit. i. 294.

‡ Beorwald, or a person of the same name, is alluded to in Willibald's Life of Boniface, ch. iv. Beorwald "qui divina cœnobium gubernatione quod antiquorum nuncupatur vocabulo Glestingaburg regebat." As Forthere was consecrated in 709, and Beorwald had ceased to be an abbot in 712, the date of the letter may be very nearly fixed. V. Cod. Dipl. No. 63.

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will lose nothing of his just claim upon her by this transaction. I beg you, as I ought previously to have done, to remember me, as often as you think of yourself, in your frequent prayers. May our Lord Jesus Christ preserve your reverence in safety, and add to your days."

In nothing was the conduct of Brihtwald more praiseworthy than in the zeal which he displayed in the missionary cause. The success which attended the sagacious administration of Theodorus resulted in the peace and harmony of the Church. And the Church of England, which, before his time, had been itself a missionary station, had now become the seat of missionary operations, the attention of zeal and piety being directed to the conversion of the pagans of Germany. With this important branch of Christian duty are connected the names of Willibrord, Wilfrid, Hewald the white and Hewald the black; but the most successful labourer was Winfrid, a native of Crediton, in Devonshire, who, under the name of Boniface, has been called the Apostle to the Germans. He frequently alludes to the patronage which he received in early life from Archbishop Brihtwald. To this subject we shall have occasion to revert when we shall have to speak of Archbishop Bregwin.

But although the long episcopate of Brihtwald was one of peace and internal prosperity, he was not without his troubles. Wilfrid did not die till 709, and while Wilfrid lived there was sure to be turmoil, either for good or for evil. Through the intervention of Theodorus, Wilfrid was restored to the see of York; but he returned with a spirit as haughty as that which had led to his deposition. When King Aldfrid and his Witenagemot determined to carry out the provisions of the late synod of Hertford, to convert the monastery of Ripon into a cathedral, and to establish there a diocese independent of York, Wilfrid refused his consent. The Archbishop of Canterbury was required to interpose

his metropolitan authority, and a general synod was convened at a place called Eastanfeld. The archbishop presided; the king attended. The synod demanded of Wilfrid an unqualified submission to the constitutions of the late Archbishop of Canterbury, sanctioned, as they were, by a council regularly convened. He alleged the papal decision, by which the ordinances in question were set aside. The plea was unanimously disallowed; and, still further, Wilfrid was required to sign a deed, signifying his renunciation of all episcopal jurisdiction in Northumbria; and then, on condition of his refraining from all attempts to disturb the existing settlement of the Church, he would be permitted to retain his monastery. Wilfrid's anger knew no bounds. Who were they who dared to sit in judgment upon him? "Was not I," he exclaimed, in egotistic eloquence; "was not I the first to encounter and root out the errors of the Scottish schismatics? Was it not I who brought back the Northumbrians to the orthodox observance of the Paschal feast and the coronal tonsure? Who but I taught them the antiphonal chant? Who but I established the true monastic life according to the rule of St. Benedict, of which all up to that time were ignorant?" He accused his judges of contumacious resistance for twenty-two years to the decrees of Rome; and remembering the power of his eloquence and the nature of his argument in King Oswy's time, he tauntingly demanded whether they would dare to compare their Archbishop of Canterbury (a manifest schismatic, as he called Theodorus,) with the successor of St. Peter? The old man repeated himself in vain; the king and his wise men were unmoved. He then appealed to the Roman see, and challenged any and all who had aught against him to proceed with him to Rome and to abide the judgment there to be given in his cause.

Brihtwald. 701.

The archbishop, supported by the king and the synod, declared that by his appeal to the Pope of Rome he had

CHAP. V. Brihtwald. 701. pronounced his own condemnation, and that *a preference for any other tribunal over that of a native synod* was an ample justification of the judgment already pronounced. *

He was condemned as contumacious, deposed, and excommunicated. So great was the detestation felt for a man who preferred a foreign jurisdiction to that of his native land, that no one would eat in his company. Food which had been blessed by any of Wilfrid's party was to be thrown away as an idol offering; the sacred vessels which he used were to be cleansed from pollution.

The old man, seventy years of age, took the long and perilous journey to Rome, and returned with a second papal mandate for his restoration. Wilfrid, on arriving 704. in England, transmitted it to King Aldfrid, but the king was inflexible; he refused all concession. "Not one word," he replied, "will I alter of a sentence issued by myself, the archbishop, and all the dignitaries of the land, for any writing you may bring to me from the Apostolic see, as you call it." To this decision he firmly and temperately adhered.†

It was very different with the archbishop. He was weak, vacillating, alarmed on the one hand, by the threats of Rome, and ready on the other hand to sacrifice anything for the sake of peace. Wilfrid visited him. The weak mind and will were overawed by the stern resolution and the powerful eloquence of the northern prelate, and at the same time, from what afterwards occurred, we may infer that the gentle spirit of Brihtwald was not without its influence on the generous, though violent temper of Wilfrid. But what steps could be taken? What could the intimidated Brihtwald do? These were the questions for which he was seeking an answer when the news arrived of Aldfrid's death. Wilfrid was now again

* Eddius, 45.

† Eddius, 56.

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Brihtwald. 705.

in Yorkshire, where his partisans attributed the king's death to the Divine vengeance. Meantime a revolution took place. The reins of government were seized by Eadwulf, who had a large military force under his command, and who set aside the claims of Osred, the son and heir of the late King Aldfrid. Wilfrid sent in his adhesion to the new government; but Eadwulf's answer to the messengers of Wilfrid was different from what he expected: "I swear by my salvation, unless within six days that man depart from the kingdom, he and all his shall perish."

Wilfrid then united himself to the party of Osred, who was a minor only eight years of age. Affairs assumed now a different aspect. The archbishop was prepared to mediate and to become a peacemaker. Berechtfrid, the chief minister in the new court, was gained to the side of Wilfrid, and the abbess Elfleda, the late king's sister, asserted that on his deathbed King Aldfrid had declared his intention to restore Wilfrid. This statement, whether true or not, made an impression upon the thanes who were attached to Aldfrid's memory, and the archbishop considered this to be a favourable opportunity for convening another synod, which was held on the east side of the river Nidd. All the magnates of the kingdom, civil and ecclesiastical, attended, and the young king himself was present. Wilfrid insisted upon the papal letter being read; the archbishop compromised the matter; the synod so far condescended as to permit it to be read, but the archbishop, instead of translating it, professed to give the substance, and he was thus able to omit the offensive portions of it, only reading the threatenings addressed to the clergy. Things had been so well managed that hostile feelings towards Wilfrid had ceased to exist; there was a disposition to meet the wishes of the archbishop, and in the north as well as in the south there was a desire for peace and quiet. But the bishops and clergy would not

CHAP. V. Brihtwald. 705.

repeal a judgment pronounced by their predecessors with the consent and under the authority of the king and the archbishop. The dispute ran high, but the court had been gained, and the thanes were induced to yield. Upon that, the bishops retired to consult by themselves. At length a compromise was effected, much to the surprise of every one, by a great concession on the part of Wilfrid. The septuagenarian prelate, like the rest of the world, was at length anxious for repose. The papal decree was still rejected. Wilfrid was not, as the Bishop of Rome demanded, restored to the see of York. But he was licensed once more to perform episcopal acts. He accepted the see of Hexham, and was permitted to enjoy the rents and profits of his favourite monastery of Ripon. He died
709. Bishop of Hexham in the year 709. This was the one event of Brihtwald's life, and we must certainly concede to him the praise of considerable diplomatic skill. The very faint praise accorded to him by Bede may serve to convince us, that the party whom Wilfrid represented were disappointed in not finding him a thorough partisan, his object being to keep peace between all parties.

At the close of his life, his church contrasted favourably with the condition of the church in other parts of the world. The progress of the Saracens since 622 (the date of the Hegira), had been such that Christianity was almost exterminated in Asia and Africa. Constantinople itself was threatened, and more than once besieged. The disunion between the patriarchates of the East and the patriarchate of the West was becoming more apparent, and was likely to be attended by disastrous consequences on either side. The patriarchs of Constantinople would not retire from the right conceded to them at the council of Chalcedon, which placed them on a perfect equality with the bishops of Rome, to whose increasing demands and encroachments the emperors, in their weakness, were con-

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Brihtwald. 709.

tinually making concessions. War between these two great branches of the Christian Church was almost declared, when the council in Trullo, or the Quinisextine Council, was held. Convoked by the Emperor Justinian II., it was called Quini-sextum, because it was considered supplementary to the fifth and sixth councils, in which no canons were decreed respecting the regimen, discipline, rites, and morals of the clergy; and the council in Trullo, because the fathers met in the trullum or vaulted hall of the imperial palace at Constantinople. Many of the decisions of this council were pointedly and offensively directed against the Church of Rome. The council denounced, for example, the Roman custom of keeping every Saturday, as well as every Wednesday, in Lent, as a day of rigid abstinence from food; it declared this to be contrary to the apostolic rule, and ordered that the Church of Rome should be admonished to reform its practice on this point. It denied by implication any inherent superiority in the see of Rome beyond what had been conceded to it, and asserted the right of the emperor, if he were pleased to exercise it, to raise any other bishopric to an equality with that of Rome. It rejected the Roman canon, which would compel the married clergy to separate from their wives, and asserted the rule, still observed in the Eastern Church, that the marriage of a clergyman must take place before his ordination. It referred more than once to the excommunication of Pope Honorius, as an heresiarch, at the sixth general council.* The Bishop of Rome resented these proceedings, and was treated by the emperor as a refractory subject, while the emperor was, in his turn, insulted in the person of his protospatharius by the Roman people, who sided with their bishop.

* Labbe, pp. 1141—1148.

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We turn with satisfaction from these fierce controversies, to the description which Bede gives of the Church of England, such as Brihtwald left it; and, however inferior Brihtwald may appear when compared with Theodorus, if we have regard to his encouragement of missionary exertion, to the increase of the episcopate, to the distinguished men, such as Boniface, Aldhelm, and Daniel, whom he promoted, or to the happy condition of the Church of England at the time of his death, we must regard Brihtwald as not among the least eminent of the many eminent men who during the Anglo-Saxon period occupied the chair of Canterbury, in which he sat for more than thirty-seven years.

At the time of his death, the porch at St. Augustine's being now full, the archbishop was buried within the church itself. I believe this to be the first instance of intramural burial in the Church of England.

TATWINE.*

Tatwine. 731.

The archiepiscopal see was occupied by Tatwine for the short space of three years; and during this brief episcopate the ecclesiastical historians have only to observe that nothing memorable occurred in the Church of England; but the biographer refers to Tatwine as a distinguished scholar, poet, and divine. As a divine, he was respected for his devotion and wisdom, and Bede declares him to have been

* Authorities:—Bede; Simeon of Durham; William of Malmesbury; Roger Hoveden; Henry of Huntingdon; Wright, Biog. Brit. Literaria; Godwin, De Præsulibus.

Of his name, through the carelessness of chroniclers, there are many corruptions. He is called Cadwine, Scadwine, Tautun, &c.; Tadwinus, Hunt., M. Westm., Floren.; Tacuine and Tatwinus, Bede; Tathwinus, Chron. Petrob; Stadwinus, Lit. Tax. Wintoñ.; see Richardson's Godwin.

splendidly versed in holy writ *; as a scholar, he has the honour of standing second, in point of date, of the Anglo-Latin poets. CHAP. V. Tatwine. 731.

He was by birth a Mercian, and was educated, as is supposed, at St. Augustine's, where he profited by the instructions of Theodorus and Hadrian. From St. Augustine's he removed to Breodone or Briudun (Bredon) in Worcestershire, where he became a monk. It strikes us, at first, as remarkable that a distinguished scholar should leave Canterbury, at that time the Athens of England, and retire from all literary society and connection to a remote monastery, not to become the abbot, but to reside as one of the brethren; and especially when we know, from his writings, that he had nothing of the ascetic about him, that he was a man of society, and did not therefore retire for devotional purposes, or from the impulses of fanaticism. We account for this circumstance by referring to the great object of Theodorus, who desired to convert the English monasteries into schools of learning; and we can easily understand his sending some of the most distinguished of the scholars of St. Augustine's to carry out his intentions in the provincial monasteries, where they became either scribes engaged in copying manuscripts, or the instructors of youth. An idle monk was about the last thing that the active Theodorus would have tolerated. That Tatwine became the instructor of youth, the master of the schools, in the monastery of Breodone, is more than probable, and there he carried on the system of education adopted already at St. Augustine's, under the patronage of Theodorus, and under the immediate superintendence of such men, in succession, as Benedict Biscop, Hadrian, and Albinus. As Tatwine is the first of the great scholars who by their talents reflected credit upon their teachers at St. Augustine's, this seems to

* "Vir religione et prudentia insignis, sacris quoque literis nobiliter instructus."—*Bede*, v. 23.

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be the proper place to advert to the system of education which Theodorus introduced into this country, and which, in principle, is substantially the same as that which now prevails.

There was certainly a blending of the professorial and tutorial systems. When books were scarce, oral instruction, or instruction through the medium of lectures, was a necessity. At the present time a man of moderate abilities, by the help of books, may become a good instructor; but at the time we are speaking of, eloquence on the part of the professor was important, as the scholars must, many of them, have had no other means of information than that which was derived from the notes they took during the time of the lecture, which they afterwards committed to memory. But the proficiency of the scholars was tested, not only by an occasional examination, but by a constant course of questioning and cross-questioning, as connected with each lesson. The instruction was catechetical. Of the mode of conducting these examinations some examples exist, and the questions put to the pupils of the arithmetic class are very similar to those with which the masters and scholars of National schools are familiar as emanating from Her Majesty's Inspectors. For example: "The swallow once invited the snail to dinner; he lived just one league from the spot, and the snail travelled at the rate of only one inch a day: how long would it be before he dined?" Again, "Three men and their three wives came together to a river side, where they found one boat, which was capable of carrying over only two persons at once; all the men were jealous of each other: how must they contrive so that no one of them should be left alone in company with his companion's wife?" Another is as follows: "An old man met a child, 'Good day, my son,' says he, 'may you live as long as you have lived and as much more, and thrice as much as all this, and if God

give you one year in addition to the others you will be a century old :' what was the lad's age?" * CHAP. V.

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Aldhelm, the great scholar of the age, to whom we have already referred, complains of the difficulties he encountered in the arithmetic school, and we shall easily sympathise with him if we bear in mind that the Arabic figures were not introduced before the tenth century, when they were received from the Mahometans in Spain. A kind of manual arithmetic was at this time encouraged: the numbers from 1 to 100 were expressed by the fingers of the left hand; from 100 to 10,000 by those of the right; from 10,000 to 100,000 by varying the position of the left; and from 100,000 to 1,000,000 by varying the position of the right hand.†

We learn from Aldhelm that there was a class for geometry, but as Euclid did not make his appearance in England before the reign of King Athelstan, we may conclude that, at the period now under consideration, the geometry referred to had relation not to pure and abstract science, but simply to mensuration.

In all ages of the Church, from the time of David, we may say indeed, from the time of Miriam, attention has been paid to music. Of music, so far as vocal music is concerned, we have already spoken in the life of Honorius; and it is unnecessary to mention in detail the various instruments, such as the horn, trumpet, flute, harp, and lyre in its several forms, which are to be seen on the ancient manuscripts; but we cannot leave unnoticed the mention which is made of the organ in Ald-

* These are taken from a manuscript in the British Museum, which is certainly not of later date than the tenth century, by Mr. Wright, Introduct. Biog. Brit. Lit. i. 74. To Wright, Turner, Wanley, Lingard, and to Bede, Alcuin, and Boniface, the reader is referred generally for the statements made in this chapter.

† Bede, De Indigitatione, opp. i. 165.

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helm's poem, "De Laudibus Virginitatis." He speaks of listening to the mighty organ with its tones and blasts, when the ear is soothed by the wind-giving bellows, the other parts of the instrument shining in gilt chests.* Muratori states that the construction of organs, such as that which is here described, was in the eighth century known only to the Greeks, and that the first organ, introduced into western Europe, was one sent to Pepin from Greece in 756. It now appears, however, that, while we are indebted to Honorius for our ecclesiastical music, in the chants still heard in our cathedrals, we also owe to Theodorus that noble instrument which, with modern improvements, is now regarded as almost a necessary article of church furniture, and of which our church was in possession before any other church in western Europe.

In all branches of science our Anglo-Saxon forefathers shared the ignorance which prevailed throughout Europe until the dawn of scientific light in the mind of the illustrious Bacon. In Astronomy there was no want of observation as to the phenomena, but the grand error consisted in accepting too readily the first conjecture on their probable causes, and in relying on the dogmata of the ancients, in what related to the material universe, with the same implicit confidence as that with which the words of Revelation were received in what relates to the kingdom of grace.

The learned reader is aware that the wisdom of this mode of proceeding was questioned by Alcuin, and that Bede ventured upon some speculations which may convince us that, in another age, he would have been as much distinguished as a man of science as he is now for his ability as an historian.

* "Maxima millenis auscultans organa flabris
Mulceat auditum ventosis follibus iste,
Quamlibet auratis fulgescant cætera capsis."
ALDHELM.: ed. Giles, p. 138.

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It were easy to amuse the reader by a reference to erroneous and absurd notions, such as Turner produces from an Anglo-Saxon MS. in the Cotton library, in which we are informed, the authorities being duly given, that the world's length is twelve thousand miles, and its breadth six thousand three hundred, besides the islands; that there are thirty-four kinds of snakes upon the earth, thirty-six kinds of fish, and fifty-two kinds of flying birds; that the name of the city to which the sun goes up is called Jaiaca; the city where it sets is Jainta; that the sun, which is of burning stone, is red in the first part of the morning because he comes out of the sea, and red again in the evening because he looks over hell; that he shines at night in three places; first in leviathan, the whale's inside; next in hell, and afterwards in the islands called Glith, where the souls of holy men remain till doomsday. But we arrive nearer at the truth by reference to another tract in the Cotton library, for which we are indebted to the research of Mr. Wright and Mr. Halliwell. In this document we are told that night is the effect of the earth's shadow when the earth itself is between us and the sun. An account is given of the year, its seasons, divisions, and durations; and this leads to the definition of the lunar as contradistinguished from the solar year. And here we are favoured with an illustration:—"You must," says the writer, "understand that as the man who goes round one house makes a less course than he who goes round the whole town, so the moon has his course to run sooner on the lesser circuit than the sun has on the greater: this is the moon's year." He goes on to say:—"All that is within the firmament is called the middle region or the world. The firmament is the ethereal heaven adorned with many stars; the heaven, the sea, and the earth are called the world. The firmament is perpetually turning round about us, under this earth

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and above, and there is an incalculable space between it and the earth. Four and twenty hours have passed, that is one day and one night, before it is once turned round, and all the stars which are fixed in it turn round with it. The earth stands in the centre, by God's power so fixed that it never swerves either higher or lower than the Almighty Creator, who holds all things without labour, established it. Every sea, although it be deep, has its bottom on the earth, and the earth supports all seas and the ocean, and all fountains and rivers run through it: as the veins lie in a man's body, so lie the veins of water throughout the earth." "The north and south stars," we are told in another place, "of which the latter is never seen by men, are fixed on the poles of the axis on which the firmament turns. Falling stars are igneous sparks thrown from the constellations like sparks that fly from coals in the fire. The earth itself resembles a pine-nut, and the sun glides about it by God's ordinance, and on the end where it shines it is day by means of the sun's light, whilst the end which it leaves is covered with darkness until it return again!"* We are not to feel surprised when we find our Anglo-Saxon ancestors not wiser on these points than the philosophers who preceded them, and those who for many generations followed. All that could be done in the schools of Theodorus was to make the pupils acquainted with the opinions and conjectures of their contemporaries.

To medical studies great attention was paid, and Hippocrates was studied. † Many curious Anglo-Saxon manuscripts are to be found in our libraries on medical subjects in general, and on medical botany in particular. ‡

* Wright, Biog. Brit. Lit. i. 88.

† Bede, De Ratione Temporum, c. xxx. p. 205.

‡ Wanley, pp. 72—75, 176—180. In one there are above two hundred remedies against various diseases.

The receipts against the bites of adders and other venomous reptiles are so numerous as to show how much the country was infested by these creatures before it was cultivated and drained, the woods felled, and the moors enclosed. Diseases of the eye were evidently frequent, for which a paste of strawberry plants and *pepper*, to be diluted for use in sweet wine, was prescribed.*

The want most felt was the want of surgical skill. We do indeed read of a skull fractured by a fall from a horse, which the surgeon closed and bound up; of a man whose legs and arms were broken by a fall, which the surgeons cured by tight ligatures; and of a diseased head, in the treatment of which the medical attendants were successful;—but on the other hand, we read of Leopold, Duke of Austria, so late as the twelfth century, when amputation was necessary, holding an axe to the limb which his chamberlain struck with a beetle; and we are not surprised to hear that death followed the treatment. The following story is told by Bede: Once upon a time, John, Bishop of York, came to the monastery of Virgins, at the place called Wetadun†, where the Abbess Hereberga then presided. "When we were come thither," said he, "and had been received with great and universal joy, the abbess told us that one of the virgins, who was her daughter in the flesh, laboured under a grievous distemper, having been lately bled in the arm, and whilst she was engaged in study, was seized with

* Mr. Wright gives us, from an Anglo-Saxon manuscript, a cure for the headache: a salve composed of rue and mustard-seed to be applied to that part of the head which was free from pain; i.e. a mustard plaster. Biog. Brit. Lit. i. 99. A prescription for the bite of a mad dog runs thus: "Take two onions or three, boil them, spread them in ashes, mix them with fat and honey, lay them on."

† That is "Wettown," now Watton, in Yorkshire.

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a sudden violent pain, which increased so that the wounded arm became worse, and so much swelled that it could not be grasped with both hands; and thus being confined to her bed, she was expected to die very soon. The abbess entreated the bishop that he would vouchsafe to go in and give her his blessing, for that she believed that she would be the better for his blessing or touching her. He asked when the maiden had been bled; and being told that it was on the fourth day of the moon, said: You did very indiscreetly and unskilfully to bleed her on the fourth day of the moon; for I remember that Archbishop Theodorus, of blessed memory, said, that bleeding at that time was very dangerous, when the light of the moon and the tide of the ocean are increasing; and what can I do to the girl if she is like to die."*

But although we have availed ourselves of this opportunity to mention some of the various departments of information and instruction offered to the inquiring mind in the schools founded by Theodorus, and carried on by Tatwine and the other disciples of Hadrian, we are to remark that the grand principle of education laid down by these illustrious men,—the principle revived by William of Wykeham, and still the characteristic of English schools and universities, — was not to impart knowledge but to exercise the mind; not to sow the land but to plough the soil; not to burden the memory, but to give that vigour to the intellect which might enable it, in after life, to realise information for itself and turn it to a good account. The pupils of St. Augustine's were well exercised in composition, and in that accuracy of composition which is acquired

* Bede, v. 3. I give this story because it illustrates the manners of the age. Theodorus did not profess to be a physician, and only mentioned a very common notion. I have heard an opinion very similar asserted even in these enlightened days.

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by writing verses in a foreign or dead language, where the rules are ascertainable and fixed. It was by early discipline in composition that the minds were trained, through which England sustained, for more than a century, an intellectual pre-eminence among the nations of Western Europe.

For the exercise of the mind nothing has been found comparable to the study of the philosophy of grammar, except the mathematics. Mathematics, for a reason already assigned, could not be employed for educational purposes by Theodorus and Hadrian; but those who sought honours in the school of Canterbury and its affiliated establishments, were well worked in verse-making. Aldhelm, in describing his studies, remarks: "Et quod his multo perplexius est, centena scilicet metrorum genera pedestri regula discernere, et musicæ cantilenæ modulamina recto syllabarum transitu lustrare. Cujus rei studiosis lectoribus tanto inextricabilior obscuritas prætenditur, quanto rarior doctorum numerositas reperitur. Sed de his prolixo ambitu verborum disputare epistolaris angustia minime sinit; modo videlicet ipsius metricæ artis clandestina instrumenta literis, syllabis, pedibus, poeticis figuris, versibus, tonis, temporibus conglomerantur. Poetica quoque septenæ divisionis disciplina; hoc est, Acephalos, Procilos cum cæteris, qualiter varietur, qui versus monostemi, qui pentastemi, qui decastemi certa pedum mensura terminentur, et qua ratione catalectici, vel brachiacatalectici seu hypercatalectici versus sagaci arguimentatione colligantur. Hæc, ut reor, et his similia brevi temporis intercapedine apprehendi nequaquam possunt." * More than this the most devoted Etonian or Wykehamist could not desire, and we are interested in perceiving how good scholarship, and honourable employment in the labours of tuition, were

* Malmesbury, De Vit. Ald. Anglia Sacra, ii. 6.

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regarded at so early a period as qualifications for the mitre.

Tatwine. 731.

Enigmas were in fashion in those days, and were encouraged as means of sharpening the intellect. Men of genius are, of course, independent of rules, and by a kind of spontaneous exercise they invigorate their own minds; but it is for the training of the ordinary intellect that schools are established and universities endowed. There does not appear to have been any genius in Tatwine, but through the education he received he became a man of learning, useful in his generation, and though not a poet he was a skilful versifier. A man proves his scholarship by writing in Latin; but it is in its native language that genius thinks. In Milton's Latin verses we see the man of accurate learning, but it is in English that the sublimity of the great poet is expressed. Tatwine did indeed write some poems in Anglo-Saxon, from which we may infer that he had some originality of thought; but these poems have not been preserved, and we may presume that, if they had been worth preserving, some of them would have been found in our libraries. The sublime poem of Beowulf lived as long as the Saxon was a living language, and might add to the fame of any modern poet who should employ his leisure in a metrical version of it; and from the poems of Cædmon even Milton is supposed to have culled some flowers. But of Tatwine, we only possess some Latin verses, distinguished for elegance and playfulness rather than power. There is a book of his Ænigmata in the British Museum, from which I select the three following as entertaining specimens of his style of composition :—*

* MS. Reg. 12, c. 23. Mr. Wright, in his "Biographia Britannica Literaria," to which frequent reference has been made in this work, has presented three other riddles of Tatwine. It will be seen that the version is slightly corrupt. The MS. is of the ninth century.

"DE TINTINNO.

"Olim dictabar proprio cognomine Cæsar,
Optabantque meum proceres jam cernere vultum,
Nunc aliter versor superis suspensus in auris,
Et cæsus cogor late persolvere planctum,
Cursibus haut tardis cum adhuc tum turba recurrit,
Mordeo mordentem labris mox dentibus absque."

"DE RECITABULO (EAGLE-LECTERN).

"Angelicas populis epulas dispono frequenter
Grandisonisque aures verbis cava guttura complent,
Succedit vox sed mihi nulla aut lingua loquendi,
Et bina alarum fulci gestamine cernor,
Queis sed abest penitus virtus jam tota volandi,
Dum solus subter constat mihi pes sine passu."

"DE STRABIS OCULIS.

"Inter mirandum cunctis est cetera quod nunc
Narro quidem, nos produxit genetrix uterinos,
Sed quod contemplor mox illud cernere spernit,
Atque quod ille videt secum mox cernere nolo,
Est dispar nobis visus sed inest amor unus."

In an age when learning was valued, we are not surprised to know that a learned man, though not the most learned of his time, was appointed to succeed Archbishop Brihtwald, when in 731 the see of Canterbury was vacant. Tatwine was consecrated in his own cathedral on the 10th of June in this year.

The state of the establishment throughout the different kingdoms at this time, very different from what it was left by the Italian missionaries, may be seen from the following table:—

Kingdoms.	Sees.	Prelates.
Kent	Canterbury	Tatwine.
	Rochester	Aldwulf.
East Saxons	London	Ingwald.
East Angles	Dunwich	Aldbert.
	Elmham	Hadulac.
West Saxons	Winchester	Daniel.
	Sherborne	Forthere.

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Kingdoms.	Sees.	Prelates.
Mercia	Lichfield	Aldwin.
Tatwine. 734.	Hereford	Walstod.
	Worcester	Wilfrid.
	Lindsey (Sidnacester) . .	Cunebert.
	Leicester	Vacant.
South Saxons	Selsey	Vacant.
Northumbria	York	Wilfrid II.
	Lindisfarne	Ethelwald.
	Hexham	Acca
	Whitherne	Pecthelm.

Tatwine passed the remainder of his life in the quiet routine of episcopal duty. Nothing occurred to make memorable his brief occupancy of the archiepiscopal throne. He died in 734, after governing the church for three years.*

NOTHELM.†

Nothelm. 735. Nothelm was born in London, and is supposed, though without authority, to have been educated at

* Godwin, "De Præsulibus," asserts that Tatwine went to Rome to resist the conversion of York into a metropolitan see, and that he there received the pallium. He gives no authority for the statement. But the document upon which the statement rests must be a letter of Pope Gregory in Malmesbury "De Pont.," in which the going to Rome and the giving of the pallium are specified. Although the letter is supposed by Jaffe to be genuine, and is printed in Wilkins, it is not beyond suspicion of forgery. The question relating to the assumption of metropolitan dignity on the part of the Bishop of York was not mooted till after Tatwine's death. He was archbishop only three years; and if half his time had been spent abroad—six months in going, six months in returning, and some few months in transacting business at Rome—the circumstance was not likely to have escaped notice.

† Authorities:—Bede; Chron. W.; Thorn; Matthew of Westminster; Roger Hoveden; Florence of Worcester; Brompton.

Notelinus, Brompt.; Nottelmus, H. Hunting.; Northelmus, Tax. Wint. "Eximiæ sanctitati optime convenit nomen suum. Dicitur enim Nothelmus, quasi 'notus almus.'"—*Elmham*, 312.

St. Augustine's, Canterbury. In the schools, or if, by a slight anachronism we may be permitted to employ the term, in the universities which, through the influence of Theodorus, were established in the north as well as in the south of England, the practical wisdom of the great archbishop is apparent in his care not to draw too tightly the cords of discipline. His object was not only to educate learned divines, but to civilise society, by imparting some amount of knowledge to all persons, but especially to persons of the higher classes of society. A large number of youths, therefore, came to these schools, who did not think it necessary to renounce their field sports, in order to be absorbed in literary pursuits. This gave offence to many good men, especially where fanaticism assumed an ascetic form, whose minds were less expansive than the minds of the two distinguished men, the one an African and the other a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, to whom we are indebted for laying the foundation of English learning.

What were the amusements of the less studious among the undergraduates of Canterbury, I am not prepared to say; but although the north of England even then took the lead, if not in fox-hunting, at least in following the harriers, we have no reason to suppose that the students of Canterbury were far behind them. Writing to the monks of Wearmouth, Alcuin obliquely accuses them, as William of Malmesbury expresses it, of having done the very thing which he exhorts them not to do: "Let the youths be accustomed to attend the praises of our heavenly King; not to dig up the burrows of foxes, or to pursue the winding mazes of hares."*

We possess, at the same time, a record of the practice of the students of Canterbury in punning, which is the more valuable as it shows the estimation in which young Nothelm

* William of Malmesbury, Gesta Reg. lib. i. 70.

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was held. It was remarked how well his name accorded with his character: "Dicitur enim Nothelmus, quasi notus almus."*

He conciliated to himself the patronage of Albinus the abbot, a friend of the venerable Bede, and in Northbald, who succeeded Albinus, he found a congenial companion. It was not to the highest branches of scholarship that Nothelm applied himself, although in the transcription of ancient manuscripts, judgment in the selection of them was required, as well as artistic skill. The increase of learning occasioned, of course, a demand for books, and so indefatigable were the scribes in England, that our libraries soon became the most famous in western Europe.† The attention of a scribe was not directed exclusively to calligraphy: the illuminations which may be seen in manuscripts, from the eighth century to the eleventh, display both the mind and the art of a painter. These Anglo-Saxon manuscripts are remarkable for the bold character of the writing, and the richness of the illuminations, of which the chief features are extreme intricacy of pattern, and interlacings of knots in a diagonal or square form; sometimes interwoven with animals, and terminating in heads of serpents or birds. So highly esteemed was this branch of learning and art in combination, that the attention of men of science was directed to the method of preparing gold for the gold writing, and we possess more than one of their receipts. For example: "File gold very finely, put it in a mortar, and add the sharpest vinegar; rub it till it becomes black, and then pour it out; put to it some salt or nitre, and so it will dissolve; so you may write with it, and thus all the metals may be dissolved." Another

* Elmham, p. 312.

† Alcuin's catalogue of the library at York, established by the munificence of Aelbert, has been already given in the life of Theodorus.

method of ancient chrysography was this: "Melt some lead, and frequently immerge it in cold water; melt gold and pour that also into the same water and it will become brittle; then rub the gold filings carefully with quicksilver, and purge it while it is liquid. Before you write dip the pen in liquid alum, which is best purified by salt and vinegar." Another method was this: "Take thin plates of gold and silver, rub them in a mortar with Greek salt or nitre till it disappears; pour on water and repeat it; then add salt, and so work it even when the gold remains; add a moderate portion of the flowers of copper and bullock's gall; rub them together and write and burnish the letters." *

So eminent in this art did Nothelm become, and so well qualified, by his learning, to select manuscripts as well as to copy them, that he was sent to Rome, in order that from the manuscripts there, he might enrich the libraries of his native land. Elmham expresses pleasure at the easy access he obtained to the archives of Rome, and attributes it to the high character which attended Nothelm. We may add, that, from the circumstances of the times, there was an inclination on the part of the authorities at Rome, to conciliate one who came with recommendations from a church at this time in friendly relations with their Frankish neighbours.

The Roman government was in an unsatisfactory and transitional state. Up to this period, Rome had been nothing more than a provincial city of the empire, and its bishop merely the subject of the emperor of Constantinople. But, owing to circumstances arising out of the iconoclastic controversy, to which we shall have occasion hereafter more particularly to refer, a rupture between

* These prescriptions are translated by Turner, from Muratori, ii. pp. 375—383. There are other methods in Muratori, by which even marble and glass may be gilt.

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the emperor and the Bishop of Rome had taken place, and was about to be final. Two popes had been summoned to Constantinople to give an account of their doctrine and conduct, one of whom had died in exile, while a third had been condemned as a heretic. When the emperor, through the Exarch of Ravenna, thus tyrannised over the Bishop of Rome, all that portion of Italy, which was not under subjection to the Lombards, was ripe for revolt. The emperor and the exarch were importunate in their exactions, and, at the same time, were unable to protect the Italians from the increasing power of the barbarians. Already a provisional government had been formed at Rome with the Pope at its head. But the Greek emperor was not the only enemy Gregory III. had to fear. If he escaped the despotism of the emperor, he might fall under the tyranny of the Lombards. He dreaded Luitprand, when approaching under the seeming garb of a friend, even more than when he appeared as an open foe. Gregory, thus situated, was beginning to think of calling in the aid of the Franks; and, although there were difficulties in the way, there was a friendly disposition evinced towards the visitors, who began now to pour, from Western Europe, into Rome; some urged by superstitious feelings, and others by the love of art and literature. Whoever was Bishop of Rome, the business of the Church was carried on with consistency and regularity in the ecclesiastical courts.

While at Rome, Nothelm was employed in collecting materials for Bede, who was then completing his ecclesiastical history, — a work, which has, until this time, been our chief authority and guide. Bede acknowledges his obligations to Nothelm in the preface to his great work: "My principal authority and aid in this work was the learned and reverend Abbot Albinus, who, educated in the Church of Canterbury by those venerable and learned men Archbishop Theodorus of blessed memory, and the Abbot

Hadrian, transmitted to me by Nothelm, the pious presbyter of the Church of London, either in writing or by word of mouth of the same Nothelm, all that he thought worthy of memory, that had been done in the province of Kent or the adjacent parts, by the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory, as he had learned the same either from written records, or the traditions of his elders. The same Nothelm, afterwards going to Rome, having, with leave of the present Pope Gregory, searched into the archives of the Holy Roman Church, found there some epistles of the blessed Pope Gregory, and other popes; and returning home, by the advice of the aforesaid most reverend father Albinus, brought them to me to be inserted in my history. Thus, from the beginning of this volume to the time when the English nation received the faith of Christ, have we collected the writings of our predecessors, and from them gathered matter for our history; but from that time till the present, what was transacted in the Church of Canterbury by the disciples of Gregory or their successors, and under what kings the same happened, has been conveyed to us by Nothelm through the industry of the aforesaid Abbot Albinus." *

Some suspicions have been cast upon the accuracy of Nothelm as a scribe. By his want of accuracy it is supposed that Bede was led into the error of mistaking Etherius, archbishop of Lyons, for Virgilius, archbishop of Arles. Gregory's letters were transmitted to Bede probably from Rome, but there was not a copy of his answer to Augustine's questions. Nothelm, in return, addressed thirty questions to Bede on the Books of Kings, the discussion of which formed a work which is still extant.

On his return to England Nothelm became Presbyter

* Bede, Preface.

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of London, as Bede calls him; Archpresbyter of St. Paul's, as he is described by Thorn.* On the death of Tatwine, he was appointed to the see of Canterbury, being consecrated in 735; in the next year he received the pallium.

There is a letter addressed to him by Winfrid or Boniface, the celebrated missionary, whose acquaintance he had formed at Rome, and it will be read as a contemporary document with some interest. Boniface was not as yet that slave to the Popedom which he afterwards became; and we may fairly presume the same independence of character in Nothelm: —

"I humbly beseech your lordship to remember me in your prayers, that my mind tossed about by many strange waves of circumstances, among the Germanic nations, may rest in peace, anchored to a rock of safety. When I quitted my native land, I went supported by the prayers of your predecessor, Archbishop Brihtwald, whose memory will ever be dear to me, and in my wandering with my brother missionaries I would fain be associated with you in the unity of the Catholic faith and in the bond of spiritual love.

"My particular object in writing to you now, is to entreat you to send to me for my guidance a copy of that letter which contains, as I am informed, the questions of Augustine the Pontiff and first preacher to the English, put to Gregory the Pope, and the answers, in which, among other things, it is stated that it is lawful for the faithful to marry within the third degree of affinity. I wish you to ascertain carefully whether the document which I am describing be authentic or not. For after

* Cathedralis ecclesiæ Sancti Pauli Londoniæ Archipresbyter. Twysden, 1772; Elmham, 312. This was most probably his title. There were many presbyters in London; Nothelm was *the* presbyter, or arch-presbyter.

diligent search, the Scriniarii assured me that no copy of it is to be found in the archives of the Roman Church, although the other correspondence with the aforesaid Pontiff Augustine has been preserved.

"I should like also very much to have your opinion with reference to a matter in which I have, through indiscretion, committed an offence: without sufficient consideration I gave my sanction to a marriage under the following circumstances: — A man stood godfather to a child, and on the death of the child's father married the mother; now this the authorities of Rome declare to be a deadly sin; they rule that in all such cases there shall be a divorce, and that in a Christian land, capital punishment or perpetual banishment must be insisted upon. If in any of the writings of the Catholic fathers, or in any canon, or in any decree of the Church, you find this to be regarded as so great a crime, have the kindness to point it out carefully, in order that I may know on what authority to act in forming my judgment on this affair. I cannot myself understand why this spiritual relation should render such a marriage so great an offence, when we are all of us, through baptism, sons and daughters of our Lord, and in this, brothers and sisters. I also wish you to inform me of the exact date of Augustine's mission." *

The only event of importance which occurred during the incumbency of Nothelm, was the conversion of the bishopric of York into a metropolitan see.

To the agitation of this subject Nothelm had himself contributed, having supplied Bede with the letters of Gregory the Great, through which, in the history of Bede, published in the year 731, the public had been reminded that it was the intention of that prelate to establish a metropolitan see in the north. The kings of North-

* S. Bonifacii Ep. 15.

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umbria and Mercia were not quite satisfied, that the bishop of the King of Kent should have the chief authority in their respective dominions. And Bede, representing a party of reformers, was earnest in urging the resumption of that metropolitan authority on the part of the see of York, which, after the expulsion of Paulinus, had been assumed by none of the northern prelates, not even by the haughty and aspiring Wilfrid.*

That see was now occupied by one of the greatest and best of the many pious prelates who adorned the Anglo-Saxon Church at this time. Egbert was a member of the royal family, being cousin to Ceolwulf, king of Northumbria, and brother of Eadbert to whom that monarch resigned his crown, when he retired to Lindisfarne; he was himself a very learned man and a patron of learning. He was the founder of the noble library to which we have more than once referred, was the friend of Bede, and the preceptor of Alcuin.

When, about this time, the King of Northumbria determined to convert the episcopate of his kingdom into a metropolitan see, it does not appear that the measure was opposed by the Church of Canterbury. It was manifestly expedient; for it was scarcely possible for the southern metropolitan to superintend properly the affairs of the northern bishoprics, and the metropolitan authority of the archbishops of Canterbury did not rest on the very firmest ground. If a controversy had ensued, the question might have been raised whether, according to Gregory's suggestion, London, already the metropolis of commerce, ought not also to be converted into the ecclesiastical metropolis for the southern portion of the island; and it was wisely determined by an archbishop whose heart was more given to his books than to polemics, that controversy should be avoided.

* See Bede's Letter to Egbert: ed. Hussey, p. 336.

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The opposition arose at Rome. The King of Northumbria determined that his metropolitan should not be inferior to the metropolitan of the King of Kent, and commanded Archbishop Egbert to apply for the pallium. The archbishop did so, but could only obtain it after much solicitation. In the progress of events, the authorities of Rome had so far advanced, that they were by no means satisfied that a metropolitan see should be erected by the authority of the crown. The pallium, in their opinion, ought to have been applied for in the first instance, because they were beginning to assert and propagate the notion, that it was through the pallium that metropolitan rights were conveyed. But attention had been called to the history of the Church of England by the researches of Nothelm and Bede: it was seen how sturdily the pretensions of the Roman bishop, even when aided by a council, had been resisted in the time of Wilfrid, and, with a wise policy, which had become traditional, the authorities of Rome receded from the maintenance of rights which were sure to be resisted; and, after claiming a power which they did not possess, but which was only faintly denied, they acceded to the request of Egbert, whilst they left the impression that by so doing they were condemning an offence.

From this time there have been always two metropolitans in the Church of England,—their relative rights and position becoming, from time to time, subjects of dispute and contention, to which we shall have occasion hereafter frequently to advert.

We should err in attributing the easy manner in which the affair was settled, solely to the prevalence of a Christian temper; there was a growing indifference with regard to ecclesiastical affairs; and when attention is distracted from objective religion, so connected are mind and matter, the religion of the inner man is found

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gradually to deteriorate. Both Tatwine and Nothelm were distinguished as scholars rather than as ecclesiastics; and although we must make considerable allowances when Bede writes in rather a bitter party spirit with a party object in view, yet it would appear that there were prelates in existence who mixed more in society and indulged more freely in the pleasures of the table than approved itself to the mind of the ascetic historian. He accuses the clergy of laxity because some of them were married, and the monks of immorality because they were not Benedictines. But he would not have expressed himself so strongly as he does, if there had not been some foundation in truth for the charges he adduces.

Nothelm was an author. The list of his works, as I find them in Tanner, is as follows: "Acta per Augustinum, lib. i.; Collectiones Londinenses, lib. i.; Homiliæ, lib. i.; Ad Alcuinum et Bedam Epistolæ; De Vita S. Augustini, libb. ii.; De Miraculis ejusdem, lib. i.; De Translatione ejus et Sociorum, lib. i." *

But the genuineness of these writings is so problematical that by modern writers the list is rejected. Nothelm departed this life on the 17th of October, 741, and was buried in the Abbey Church of St. Augustine's, Canterbury. The reader will perceive that the prejudice against intramural interments which existed in the time of Augustine had now worn away.†

* Tanner, Bibliotheca, p. 552.

† The Saxon Chronicle places his death in 741; Ann. Roffenses, 740; Contin. Bedæ, 739.

CUTHBERT.*

Of Cuthbert we are told that he was born in Mercia of noble parents, and that he was high in favour with the king.† The King of Mercia, at this time, was Ethelbald, a man handsome, elegant in his manners, and of considerable abilities, but disgracefully eminent for sensuality and pride; the most profligate man of his age, and surrounded by courtiers corrupted by his example. The great intimacy which existed between the ecclesiastic and the king would reflect disgrace upon Cuthbert, if we could not appeal to the testimony of his contemporaries for the unimpeachable morality of his conduct, and if we did not also know that he was a man of considerable erudition.

Ethelbald whose harem was filled with nuns whom he seduced, was a founder of monasteries, and Cuthbert, the court chaplain, was a monk. Though remaining a courtier, he received for his first preferment, the abbacy St. Mary's at Liming, in Kent.

In 736 he was appointed, through the influence of Ethelbald, to the see of Hereford, vacant by the death of Wahlstod, and he occupied himself in the ornamentation of his cathedral, especially in the erection of a

* Authorities: — Chron. W. Thorn; Roger Hoveden; William of Malmesbury, de Pont.; Chron. Petrob.; Chron. Sax.; Florence of Worcester; Tanner; Leland; Wright; Johnson; Thorpe; Gieseler.

† "Vir magnæ celebritatis apud Ethelbaldum Merciorum regem, in tanta gratia fuit, ut nemo homo unquam facile majori. Hanc tamen sibi conciliavit cum rara quadam eruditione tum etiam eximia morum virtute, quæ illi postea ad maximæ dignitatis munia gerenda latam fenestram aperuerunt." — *Tanner, Bibliotheca Britt.* p. 215.

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splendid cross (the crucifix had not yet arrived in England), of which he himself gives the following description:—

"Hæc veneranda crucis Christi vexilla sacratæ
Cœperat antistes venerandus nomine Valstod
Argenti, atque auri fabricare monilibus amplis;
Sed quia cuncta cadunt mortalia tempore certo,
Ipse opere in medio moriens, e carne recessit.
Ast ego successor præfati præsulis ipse,
Pontificis, tribuente Deo, qui munere fungor,
Quique gero certum Cuthberth de luce vocamen,
Omissum implevi, quod cœperat ordine pulchro."*

In 741 Cuthbert was translated to the see of Canterbury, and not long after he proceded to Rome. He must have been there in 742, when Pope Zacharias, hailed as the Father of his country, on his return from the conference at Terni, passed in a procession, which emulated the triumphs of the illustrious generals of the old Republic, from the Pantheon to St. Peter's. Our archbishop gazed with admiration upon the statesman, who, thoroughly understanding the spirit of the times, appealed from the arms to the superstition of the Lombard king, and directed the influence of the Bishop of Rome, with all the skill of an accomplished diplomatist, deceiving, and himself deceived, to rescue Rome from a foreign yoke.†

Such was Zacharias, who, though not yet prepared to assert openly what he virtually possessed, the authority of a sovereign, had nevertheless contemned the Emperor at his election, being the first who, in his election to

* Wright, Biog. Brit. Lit. i. 306.

† According to Gervas, 1641, Cuthbert received the pallium from Gregory III. But if the chronology of the Saxon Chronicle, which I have adopted, be correct, that Archbishop Nothelm died in October, 741, the statement of Gervas must be incorrect, for Gregory died in that year. The name of one pope is often given for that of another.

the Papal See, had not sought, through the Exarch of Ravenna, the imperial confirmation of the popular choice. He thought little of the master who could not help Rome in its hour of peril: and the times were perilous. The policy of Gregory III. in seeking transalpine assistance had been frustrated by the death of the illustrious Charles Martel; and the armies of Luitprand, king of Lombardy, occupied the greater part of Italy. Several cities pertaining to the duchy of Rome were in his hands, and although his attitude was not hostile to the Pope, there was cause for alarm, and the restoration of the captured cities seemed necessary to give security, or at all events to re-establish confidence in the public mind. By the ordinary acts of diplomacy Luitprand had been assailed in vain. The Pope himself demanded an interview. Surrounded by a magnificent ecclesiastical staff, such as could not fail to be imposing, by its very contrast with the armed warriors by whom Luitprand was surrounded, the Pope encountered the king in his camp at Terni.* At the services of the Church, conducted with more than ordinary solemnity and grandeur, the Pope himself officiated, and in the pulpit Luitprand was reminded of the vanity of earthly grandeur, of his former stipulation to resign the four cities of Romagna, and of the awful doom in the other world of those who violated their promises and delighted in war. Luitprand, a man of piety, was overcome: he not only yielded to the demands of the Pope, but concluded a peace for twenty years with the dukedom of Rome.*

Although the Archbishop of Canterbury must have been surprised at the worship of images which, introduced into the Church of Rome by the last two Gregories, had not been sanctioned, and was soon to be condemned, by the Church of England; although he may have been

* Anastas. in Vit. Zachariæ.

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shocked by the mummeries and processions, accompanied with profane songs and clamour in the public streets of Rome, and by heathen usages, so frequently denounced in English synods, by the phylacteries worn by women, and by the enchantments and divinations which were tolerated; although he may have expressed his disgust at the simoniacal practices and the pecuniary exactions, especially in the sale of the pallium*; he nevertheless returned to England, deeply impressed with a veneration for everything Roman. And these predilections were encouraged and increased by his intimacy with his distinguished countryman, Boniface, who became his adviser and friend.

Boniface, whose English name was Winfrid, was one of the most remarkable men of the age. The many virtues of the Apostle to the Germans, as he has been sometimes called, are well known, and his success as a missionary has been duly appreciated. But the tone of his mind was fanatical: he was always in extremes, and not always consistent. Contrary to his father's wish he became an ecclesiastic; and when a monk, contrary to the wish of his superiors he embarked as a missionary. Instead of acting as missionary of the Church of England, he repaired to Rome, where he was ordained, in the first instance, not to any particular diocese, but as an itinerant missionary bishop.†

But he was thus consecrated only on the condition of his taking an oath of obedience to the Pope, as sole and absolute head of the Church.‡ From this time his zeal for bringing all churches under the dominion of the Roman see was quite as great as his zeal for the exten-

* Zachariæ Epist. ad Bonifac. Ep. Bonif. 142.

† He afterwards became Archbishop of Mentz.

‡ The oath is given by Serarius among the Epist. S. Bonifac. p. 163.

sion of Christianity among the pagans of Germany. His hostility to all national peculiarities, or to anything contrary to the practices of the Roman Church, was such as to hurry him sometimes into language and conduct most unjustifiable. He denounced the married clergy in France as false priests, adulterers, and fornicators, and even incurred the censure of Gregory II. by re-baptizing their converts.

Such a man was not a good adviser for the Archbishop of Canterbury, but Cuthbert availed himself of his friendship to induce him to write a letter to the king, remonstrating with him on his immoralities; and the letter, though questionable as to the discretion of the writer on some points, is, on the whole, a creditable production.* Boniface went further, and, evidently on the archbishop's own suggestion, addressed a letter to Cuthbert himself, in which Boniface styles himself in the address as legate of the Catholic and Apostolic Roman Church.† It contains an account of his success in procuring a synodical submission of the German Church to the Roman See, and, thinking that the Reformation of the Church depended on such subjection, he proposes that Cuthbert should follow his example. After the customary greeting, he proceeds to speak of the blessing of friendship, referring to the authority of Solomon who saith, Blessed is the man who hath found a friend with whom he can speak as with himself; he thanks Cuthbert for some presents conveyed to him by the hand of Cynebert, his deacon, for a delightful letter, and for a *vivâ voce* message through the same person; he hopes for a frequent interchange of spiritual counsels, under His assistance, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed, *sancta desideria, recta concilia et justa opera.* After some further

* Ep. Bonif. 19.

† Ep. Bonif. 105.

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complimentary expressions, he remarks that upon those, who, like his correspondent and himself, had received the pall, a more general care of all the churches devolves than upon bishops who had only a single diocese to superintend. He then assumes that his correspondent will be pleased to hear what had lately been established in the churches over which he exercised the oversight. "In our synod (Soissons), we have confessed and decreed the whole Catholic faith, in communion with and *in subjection* to the Roman Church; and we have vowed obedience and true service to St. Peter and his vicar. We have resolved to hold annual synods, and that every metropolitan shall apply to the see of Rome for a pall; and that we will in all things strive to pay canonical obedience to the household of St. Peter, that we may show ourselves worthy to be numbered with his flock. Having agreed to and subscribed this confession, we directed it to the body of St. Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, and by the Roman clergy and pontiff it was received with satisfaction. Furthermore we determined that the canons and laws ecclesiastical, should be read at the annual synod, and that the metropolitan, honoured with a pall, should deliver a charge, and examine into the conduct of the clergy. Hunting, coursing, and hawking were prohibited; and each parochial clergyman was required to make a report during Lent to his bishop of the spiritual condition of his people." Yearly visitations and confirmations were enjoined upon the bishops, who were required, on these occasions, to instruct the common people, to put down pagan observances, auguries, phylacteries, and incantations, and to banish and drive away diviners and fortune-tellers.

In all the regulations of this period we see the difficulty of overcoming the spirit, and the very forms of paganism, even after the profession of a purer faith.

Boniface proceeds to say, that he and his had interdicted the clergy from appearing in gay attire, in uniform or in arms. Again adverting to the duty of metropolitans: they were to admonish their suffragans to hold diocesan assemblies after each synod, for carrying the synodal resolutions into effect, "and in order to afford every bishop the means of reforming what is amiss within his diocese, we have directed that he shall publicly report what is wrong to his archbishop; for thus at my own consecration, I swore to the Roman bishop to act; viz. that if I should find priests or people grievously and incorrigibly departing from the law of God, I would at all times faithfully report such cases to the Apostolic See and the vicar of St. Peter, for correction; and if I am not mistaken, whenever any bishops meet with hindrances with which they are incompetent of themselves to contend, they ought to report them to their metropolitans, and these in turn to the Roman pontiff." He then strings together a number of texts, very much after the manner of the Puritans, to show the duty of ministers to be especially diligent in preaching, and concludes: "Let us not be dumb dogs; let us not be silent watchmen; let us not be hirelings fleeing from the wolf; let us be careful shepherds watching over the flock of Christ, preaching to high and low, rich and poor, to all degrees and ages, in season and out of season, as the Lord shall grant the ability, the whole counsel of God.

"And here I must not keep silence, but I must trust to your kindness to pardon me for mentioning the fact, that the truly pious in these parts are greatly pained at seeing your church brought into contempt by the wickedness, the dishonesty, and the want of chastity which are to be deplored in many of its members. It would be some mitigation of the disgrace which is reflected upon your church, if you in a synod, and your princes co-

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operating with you, would make some regulation with respect to female pilgrimages to Rome. Among your women, even your nuns, who go in crowds to Rome, scarcely any return home unpolluted, almost all are ruined. There is scarcely a city in Lombardy, France, or Gaul, in which some English prostitute or adulteress may not be found. This is a scandal, a disgrace to your whole church."

When he proceeded to anathematise the lay men and women who for the most part presided over the monasteries, his object clearly was to bring the monasteries under the direction of ecclesiastics, or to establish the Benedictine rule, which would at once render the monasteries subservient to the Pope.

Cuthbert taking the same view of things as Boniface, and agreeing with him in thinking that unity was the one thing required to render the Church what it ought to be, and that the centre of unity must be the see of Rome; was ambitious of establishing in the Church of England, that principle which Boniface had too successfully brought to bear upon that portion of the German Church which looked upon him as its founder. He obtained the king's permission to convene a synod, which in 747 met at Cloveshoo.*

747. The King of Mercia presided. The business was opened by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who read certain letters from Pope Zacharias †, which he supposed would make an impression upon an assembly composed of those who were accustomed to regard with respect whatever came from a see and a city, of which both pilgrims and

* Where Cloveshoo was it is impossible to say; some antiquaries placing it at Cliff-at-Hoo, in Kent; some in the neighbourhood of Rochester; others contending for Abingdon; others again for Tewkesbury.

† The letters, Inett says, were addressed, not to Cuthbert, but to Boniface, congratulating him on his success. Inett, p. 175.

travellers were so eloquent, and from a prelate who was reputed to be the successor of St. Peter.* The proceedings of the synod † come before us in the form of canons; but reference is made to certain discussions, and these appear more like reports; the reporter was probably the archbishop himself, who transmitted an account of what occurred, to his friend Boniface, and who, in one place, makes use of the first person singular. The document refers to some customs prevalent at the time, and evidently shows that progress had been made in certain erroneous doctrines which were corrected at the great Protestant Reformation of our church. The convenience of the reader will be consulted by arranging what is remarkable, under the general heads, of what relates to the bishops, the other clergy, the monasteries, and the laity.

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The bishops were exhorted not to engage in secular affairs more than was necessary; to hold annual visitations, at which time they were to preach the Gospel to people of every condition, sex, and age, forbidding the pagan observances, diviners, sorcerers, auguries, omens, charms, incantations, all the filth of the wicked, and the dotages of the Gentiles. The clergy are required to look carefully after their churches, to spend their time in reading, in celebrating the sacred offices and in psalmody, in visiting the sick in the districts assigned to them by the bishop, in baptizing and preaching, and they are warned not to give to seculars or monastics an example

* The assumption of this fact, without contradiction, in Europe led to a most extraordinary proceeding a few years later, when Pope Stephen, in evident contempt of the intellect of those he regarded as barbarians, sent to the King of France what he represented to be an autograph letter from St. Peter, commanding the king to render assistance and protection to the Pope.

† They are to be found in Spelman, Johnson, and Wilkins.

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of ridiculous or wicked conversation, by drunkenness, love of filthy lucre, or obscene talking: they are directed to study the spiritual meaning of the several offices of the Church, to aim at uniformity in baptizing, preaching, and judging; that they especially instruct the people in the truths resting upon the doctrine of the Trinity, warning them that without faith it is impossible to please God: they were to instil the creed into them, that they might know what to believe and what to hope for; they were forbidden "to prate in church," or to dislocate or confound the composure of the sacred words by theatrical pronunciation: they were enjoined to follow the plain song, or holy melody, according to the custom of the Church. "Let him who cannot attain to this, simply read, pronounce, and rehearse the words." The calendar was reformed on the Roman model, and to it were added festivals in honour of Gregory and Augustine, as in our present Prayer-books. On Sundays all external business, secular meetings and journeyings, unless the cause were invincible, were prohibited; the clergy were exhorted to preach, and the people to hear the word of God.

With respect to monasteries, what Boniface had said of the immorality of the nuns when travelling abroad, was treated evidently as a party exaggeration; their journeys or pilgrimages were not prohibited according to his suggestion, but the bishops were required "to take care that monasteries, as their name imports, be honest retreats for the silent and quiet, and for such as labour for God's sake; not receptacles of ludicrous arts, of versifiers, harpers, and buffoons, but houses for them who pray, and read, and praise God; that leave be not given to every secular to walk up and down in places which are not proper for them, viz. the private apartments of the monastery, lest they take an occasion of reproach, if they see or hear any indecency in the cloisters of a monastery,

for the customary familiarity of laymen, it is said, especially in the monasteries of nuns who are not very strict in their conversation, is hurtful and vicious; because by these means, occasions of suspicion do not only arise among adversaries, or wicked men, but are in fact committed, and spread abroad, to the infamy of our profession. Let not, therefore, nunneries be places of rendezvous for filthy talk, junketing, drunkenness, and luxury, but habitations for such as live in continence and sobriety, and who read and sing psalms: and let them spend their time in reading books, and singing psalms, rather than in weaving and working party-coloured vainglorious apparel." *

Monastics and ecclesiastics are warned against drunkenness: "Nor let them," it is added, "force others to drink intemperately, but let their entertainments be cleanly and sober, not luxurious, nor with any mixture of delicacies or scurrilities, lest the reverence due to their habit grow into contempt and deserved infamy among seculars; and that, unless some necessary infirmity compel them, they do not, like common tipplers, help themselves or others to drink, till the canonical, that is, the ninth hour, be fully come:" † Monks are especially enjoined not to "imitate seculars in the fashionable gartering of their legs ‡, nor in having shags § round about their heads, after the fashion of the layman's cloke, contrary to the custom of the Church. Likewise nuns, it is said, veiled by the priest, and having taken the habit of their holy profession, ought not to go in secular apparel, or in gaudy gay clothes, such as lay-girls use, but take care always to keep the garb of chastity, which they have received, to signify their humility and contempt of the world; lest the hearts

* Johnson, Eccles. Laws, i. 252. † Ibid. 253.

‡ "In vestitu crurum per fasciolas."

§ "Coculas in circumdatione capitis."

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of others be defiled with the sight of them; and they by these means be found guilty of this defilement in the sight of God."

With reference to the laity, the people were to be taught to say the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, in the vulgar tongue; and reference is made to the practical evil which we pointed out, as likely to occur from the wrong principle upon which the Penitential of Theodorus and other Penitentials of the age were based. There is mention of a newly-invented conceit, as it was called, by which men thought that penance could be commuted by alms-deeds; and it is added: "We must speak at large of this, because a worldly rich man of late, desiring that speedy reconciliation might be granted him for gross sin, affirmed by letters, that that sin of his, as many assured him, was so fully expiated, that if he could live 300 years longer, his fasting was already paid by the (new) modes of satisfaction, viz. by the psalmody, fasting, and alms of others, abating his own fasting, or however insufficient it were. If then divine justice can be appeased by others, why, O ye foolish ensurers! is it said by the voice of truth itself, that it is 'easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven,' when he can with bribes purchase the innumerable fastings of others for his own crimes? O that ye might perish alone, ye that are deservedly called the gates of hell — before others are ensnared by your misguiding flattery, and led into the plague of God's eternal indignation. Let no man deceive himself. God deceives none when He says by the Apostle, 'We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ,' &c." *

There was a conversation on psalmody, which is re-

* Johnson, i. 259.

ported in the following words: — "When they were thus discoursing much, of those who sing psalms, or spiritual songs profitably, or of those who do it negligently, psalmody (say they) is a divine work, a great cure in many cases, for the souls of them who do it in spirit and mind. But they that sing with voice, without the inward meaning, may make the sound resemble something; therefore, though a man knows not the Latin words that are sung, yet he may devoutly apply the intentions of his own heart to the things which are at present to be asked of God, and fix them there to the best of his power. For the psalms which proceeded of old through the mouth of the prophet, from the Holy Ghost, are to be sung with the inward intention of the heart, and a suitable humiliation of the body, to the end that (by the oracles of divine praise, and the sacraments of our salvation, and the humble confession of sins, or by devoutly imploring the pardon of them) they that touch the ears of divine pity by praying for any valuable thing, may the more deserve to be heard, by their desiring and affecting to draw near to God, and to appease Him by the means which I before mentioned, especially their most holy and divine service, while they offer variety of prayers and praises to God in that sacred modulation, either for themselves or for others, quick or dead, while at the end of every psalmody they bow their knees in prayer, and say in the Latin, or, if they have not learned that, in the Saxonic, 'Lord have mercy on him, and forgive him his sins, and convert him to do Thy will;' or, if for the dead, 'Lord, according to the greatness of Thy mercy, grant rest to his soul; and for Thine infinite pity, vouchsafe to him the joys of eternal light with Thy saints.' But let them who pray for themselves have a great faith in psalmody, (performed) with reverence, as very profitable to them, when done in manner aforesaid (on condition that they persist in the

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expiation of their crimes, and not in the allowance of their vices), that is, that they may the sooner and the more easily deserve to arrive at the grace of divine reconciliation by prayers and intercessions, while they worthily sing and pray; or that they may improve in what is good; or that they may obtain what they piously ask; not with any intent that they may for one moment do evil, or omit good with the greater liberty, or relax fasting enjoined for sin, or give the less alms, because they believe others sing psalms or fast for them." *

The archbishop carried many of his points, but the proposal of Boniface to bring the Church of England under subjugation to the see of Rome, although noticed, was very quietly evaded. There had evidently been a discussion; and we are told, that "it was determined, in the twenty-fifth head, that bishops coming from synods, assembling the priests, abbots, and chiefs (of monasteries and churches) within their parish, and laying before them the injunctions of the synod, give it in charge, that they be kept. And if there be anything which a bishop cannot reform in his own diocese, let him lay it before the archbishop in synod, and publicly before all, in order to its being reformed." †

We hear little of the provincial labours of Cuthbert after this council, and he probably was occupied with the affairs of his own diocese, which were not in a pleasant position, as we shall presently have occasion to show. In the year 754, he was surprised by the intelligence that Stephen III., Pope of Rome, had arrived in France. In France a revolution had taken place; Chilperic had been deposed, and the Carlovingian dynasty was established on the coronation of King Pepin, whose brother Carloman had retired into a monastery. To solicit the king's assist-

* Johnson, Eccl. Laws, i. 257. † Ibid. i. 255.

ance against Astolf the Lombard, the Pope had crossed the Alps. The meeting between the Pope and king was regarded in that age as a very solemn event, although the narrative will, at the present time, provoke a smile. Stephen and his clergy on the one hand, were seen arrayed in sackcloth and ashes, and threw themselves at the king's feet, humbly invoking his aid, and Pepin prostrated himself before the Pope, to receive his blessing, and then walked by his side, as he rode on a palfrey to the palace of Pontyon-le-Perche. The event was of world-wide importance, because through the assistance rendered to him by Pepin, who, at the instigation of Stephen, invaded Italy, the Pope from this time assumed his place among the sovereigns of Europe. In vain did the envoys of the Byzantine Emperor demand of the victorious Pepin, that the exarchate should be restored to their master; Pepin's answer was that for St. Peter he had fought, and that what he conquered belonged to St. Peter and not to himself.*

In 755, the archbishop received intelligence of the death of his friend Boniface. In his green old age, Boniface, impelled by youthful ardour, and desirous of ending his days amid a people, who, though now relapsing, were nevertheless endeared to him by early success, resigned the see of Mentz to his brother missionary, our countryman Lullus, and returned to Friesland, where he died a martyr. Archbishop Cuthbert immediately penned a letter to Lullus, archbishop of Mentz. It is full of right feeling, but it is long and uninteresting, not worth transcribing. 755.

We must now advert to the controversy in which the archbishop was involved at the close of his life, and which was the cause of much ill blood and bad

* Anastas. 167; Fleury, xliii. 14; Milman, ii. 241; Robertson, ii. 117.

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feeling at his death. It will be remembered that one of the objects of King Ethelbert, and of Augustine, in founding the monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul, was to provide a place of sepulture for the kings of Kent and the archbishops of Canterbury. Augustine, adhering to the customs of his native land, placed the cemetery without the walls of the city. Although intramural interments had subsequently taken place, still the monastery, better known by the name of St. Augustine's, remained in Cuthbert's time, the archiepiscopal cemetery. This circumstance, in an age when a superstitious veneration for the pious dead prevailed in all classes of the community, raised the monastery in public estimation above the cathedral. The cathedral was scarcely mentioned as such, by the Augustinians, who, notwithstanding the presence of the episcopal chair, affected to speak of Christ Church or Trinity Church, while their own establishment was described as the Mater Primaria of English institutions.

This presumption naturally gave offence to the clergy of the cathedral, with whom the archbishop sided. The archbishop, of whose taste in architecture mention has been made before, enlarged the cathedral and added to its beauty. At the east end he erected a baptistery and a consistory court. And he now determined to make the cathedral the burial-place for himself and future archbishops. He had to proceed with caution. In religious establishments, as well as in the houses of the king and of the nobles, there were many retainers, dependants, and servants, ready, as all men then were, to defend their real or imaginary rights with the strong hand. The law was weak when the passions were roused, and there was no police. If, under such circumstances, the archbishop had made known his intentions with respect to his burial-place, the two parties, the

Augustinians on the one hand, and the friends of the cathedral on the other, would have been soon drawn up in battle array, and the city would have become a scene of constant warfare. He acted therefore with caution. He first obtained the king's consent to his proposed plan of operations, and then he easily secured certain members of the chapter to be his accomplices in a measure which nearly affected their own interests. He was an old man; and old men were accustomed to consider it to be as much their duty to make preparations for the disposal of their bodies, as it was to apportion their property by will. A stone coffin was introduced into the palace. There was nothing in this to create suspicion. Archbishops were always buried in stone, and as stone coffins required time for their construction, great men were usually provided with these coffins long before their death.

Cuthbert felt at last that the stroke of death was upon him, and the clerks of the cathedral were summoned to the bedside of their archbishop. They came prepared, as usual, when he could not attend the public worship, to chant the psalms of the day, and to read the comfortable words of scripture. He then confided to the whole body the plan of proceeding, which he had before devised, to give the cathedral a triumph over the insolent Augustinians.

The grateful canons, clerks, and servants, adhered strictly to his injunctions. A mysterious silence was kept as to the archbishop's state of health. It was known that he was ill, but whether the illness was to be unto death no one was prepared to say. At length the cathedral bell was heard to give out its solemn sound. It was supposed to be the passing bell, and many a devout knee was bent in private, and many a prayer uttered for the soul of the spiritual father who was now passing to his account. When, at last, the knell sounded, the monks of St. Augustine's,

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with solemn step and slow, paced through the city to bear the body of the archbishop to the monastery, until, arriving at the archbishop's palace, they were received by the cathedral party with shouts of ridicule and triumph. The archbishop had been carefully laid in the grave prepared for him in the cathedral, three days before the bell announced his death. His chapter had borne him to his last home at midnight. They were watching at his grave when the cathedral bell at last gave sound. It startled their consciences; they almost felt at first as if they had been guilty of a crime; but the feeling was momentary, and in the deep tone of the bell they heard their triumph proclaimed.

The Augustinians returned to their monastery to give vent to their feelings of indignation at the vulpine policy, as they called it, of the late archbishop, who had long cherished, in the words of their chronicler, "in his treacherous bosom a scheme most deadly, serpentine, and even matricidal." * They menaced, they remonstrated, they protested, but it was in vain, the cathedral, with one exception, was henceforth to be, during the Anglo-Saxon period, the burial-place of the archbishops of Canterbury.

BREGWIN.†

Bregwin. 759.

The name of Bregwin will not fail to remind the reader acquainted with Anglo-Saxon history, of the missionary labours of the Church of England in Anglo-Saxon times. The command of our heavenly Master is,

* The words of Sprott, adopted by Thorn in Twysden, 1771.

† Authorities:—Saxon Chronicle; Florence of Worcester; Eadmer and Osbern in Anglia Sacra; Greenwood's Cathedra Petri.

Also called Breogwinus, Flor. Wigorn; Breowinus, Diceto; Lyzigwinus, Brompton.

that we go forth into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, as God in His wisdom is pleased to provide the opportunity. This is the duty of the whole Church, of every fragmentary portion of the Church, and of each one of its individual members; and when this great duty is forgotten, we may be sure that the vitality of true religion has for a time ceased, or that the Church, if living, has become like a man who, if not actually dead, is in a state of syncope, which will become death if he be not roused to exertion.

The great mission field at this period was Germany, the interior of which country, both as to extent and population, was an unknown world.* There, protected by forests almost impenetrable, bidding defiance to the malaria from the swamps by which they were surrounded, on wide heaths or on sandy moors, roamed tribes of untamed men, more fierce than the wild beasts on which they preyed. To convert these went forth men from the British islands, who were prepared to endure the hardships of confessors, and to dare a martyr's death.

The names of Columban and Gall, of Killian and Totman, if forgotten on earth, are remembered in heaven. The eccentricities of Wilfrid are pardoned when we think of his missionary zeal; and, we would give much for a missionary report addressed to the secretary of the noble-minded Egbert from Wigbert, and the two brothers Hewald the White and Hewald the Black, before they died, blessed martyrs, in their mission to the Old Saxons.

But if we have no account of their proceedings, we are enabled, from the writings of Alcuin, to present the reader with the plan of progressive instruction which was laid down for their guidance. "This order should be preserved in teaching mature persons:—1st. They should

* Milman, ii. 280.

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be instructed in the immortality of the soul; in the future life; in its retribution of good and evil; and in the eternal duration of both conditions. 2ndly. They should then be informed for what sins and causes they will have to suffer with the devil everlasting punishment, and for what good and beneficent deeds they will enjoy unceasing glory with Christ. 3rdly. The faith of the Holy Trinity is then to be most diligently taught, and the coming of our Saviour into the world for the salvation of the human race. Afterwards impress the mystery of His passion; the truth of His resurrection; His glorious ascension; His future advent to judge all nations; and the resurrection of our bodies. Thus prepared and strengthened, the man may be baptized." *

It is a mistake to suppose that the labours of these good men were productive of no lasting effects; they ploughed the soil and prepared the way before the successful missions of Willibrord and Boniface.

Willibrord, originally a monk of Ripon, laboured with success for fifty years in Friesland, and, amidst the ruins of the old Roman municipium, Ultrajectum, he established the metropolitan see of Utrecht. Of Boniface, who became Archbishop of Mentz, we have already spoken, and have hinted at his virtues and his defects. Although an Englishman, he acted rather as a missionary of the Roman Church, and sought his mission from the Roman Bishop Gregory II. He carried to an extreme the Roman system of making concessions to heathen ignorance, as we should expect in one who, though excelling in zeal, was miserably deficient in judgment. He not only would convert the heathen temple into a church, but would substitute a saint for every idol he destroyed, and relics for other prescribed objects of religious wor-

* Alcuin, cited by Turner, iii. 519.

ship. Nevertheless, when he required aid in his missionary labours, he was again obliged to apply to the Church of England, and the application was not made in vain. Devout persons of both sexes, persons of high birth, distinguished for their learning as well as their courage and piety, joined him in the wilderness of Germany; Burchard and Lullus; the brothers Willibald and Wunnibald, with their sister Walpurgis; Wetta and Gregory, and the religious women Chunehild, the niece of Lullus, and her daughter, Berathgit; also Chunetrudis, Tecla, and Lioba.* These good people (we like to repeat their names) were dispersed, as far as their numbers would permit, among the hamlets and the homesteads of Thuringia. And they wisely increased their numbers by persuading the more distinguished and influential of their converts to send their children for education to England, then celebrated throughout the world for the learning of the schools established by Theodorus and Hadrian. The energetic returned to their native lands to assist in the further propagation of the Gospel; the more studious remained in England, which became their adopted country, there to impart to others the instruction they had themselves received. Among these was young Bregwin, to whom the attention of the English was soon attracted. His talents and virtues being really great, were, according to the benevolent custom of the age, very greatly exaggerated in public estimation.

CHAP. V. Bregwin. 759.

There are in the "Anglia Sacra" two lives of Bregwin, one by Osbern, and the other by Eadmer; and I referred to them under the the supposition that my labour would, in this instance, be confined to a collection of the facts recorded by the two authors, and to the arrangement of

* Othloni. Vit. S. Bonif. lib. i. ch. xxiii., cited in Cath. Pet. b. iv. ch. v. p. 359.

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Bregwin. 759.

them in a continuous narration; but instead of facts, we have only a eulogy, and such praise as, if abstracted from the legendary miracles which are duly recorded, might be applicable to any learned man distinguished for piety and zeal. Of all men we are told that Bregwin was the most religious; praise which means nothing unless the biographer be supposed to be acquainted with all other men's hearts, as well as with the inmost soul of the object of his admiration. But when mention is made of his powers of acquiring knowledge, of his aptness to teach, and of his success as a schoolmaster, united with all those virtues which the age expected from a monk, something intelligible is stated, and we are not surprised at his popularity.

Party feeling ran so high at Canterbury, that it was of importance to secure for the successor of Cuthbert the services of a man who would combine with a conciliatory temper the respect of the whole Church. Ethelbert, therefore, king of Kent, selected Bregwin, and recommended him earnestly to the choice of the chapter. He referred to his industry, to his patriotism as shown towards his adopted country, to his consistent life, to his courtesy of manner united with firmness of principle, to his humility and discretion, and the result was an unanimous election on the part of the clergy, which met with the universal approbation of the laity. In vain did Bregwin seek to decline the unsought honour, pleading his advanced age, and his unwillingness to be drawn from his studies. He was (says his biographer) invested with the patriarchate of Canterbury. Amidst a concourse of people, gathered from all parts of the country, he was consecrated on Michaelmas-day 759, and "ascended the pontifical chair to rule the Church of God, amidst the exultations of all." *

* Eadmer, De Vit. Bregwini, Ang. Sac. ii. 186.

His competency as a pontiff was not put to the test, during the few years of his occupancy of the metropolitan see, by the occurrence of any memorable event. We would only remark that it is a proof of the regard still entertained, in an age which had deteriorated already from primitive piety, of vital and inward religion, the religion of the heart, that such intense admiration should prevail of a man, whose only recommendation was the consistent piety of his life and his learning, which was chiefly displayed in his acquaintance with the sacred scriptures. Birchington * speaks of him as "Vir magnæ religionis." Eadmer, with extreme simplicity, remarks, as if it were something wonderful, that no miracles of Bregwin during his life have been recorded: "but those which we know, from the most valuable sources, to have been performed by his blessed body, prove more clearly than the day, what he could have done while in the flesh, if reflection and urgent occasion had inclined him to do so. But those times in which the Christian faith was everywhere established did not call for miracles; which, indeed, as the blessed Gregory observes, are required for infidels and not for believers. Nay, an outward miracle would be wrought to little purpose if there were not somewhat to work within." †

Eadmer was a man of poetical mind, and there is poetry in his description of Bregwin's death. "In the second year of his episcopate died King Ethelbert, and the year after, the winter was more than usually severe; the snow lay deep, all things were congealed by the frost, the season was fatal in its effects on animal life. And lo! when the winter was past, and the rain was over and gone, when the flowers appeared on the earth, and

* In Ang. Sac. i. 3.

† Eadmer, in Ang. Sac. ii. 183—187.

CHAP. V.

Bregwin. 765.

the time of the singing of birds was come, and the voice of the turtle was heard in the land, and the fig-tree was putting forth her green figs, and the vines with their tender grapes gave good smell, even then a voice came to Bregwin, Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon, and receive thy crown.* And the soul of our happy father left this mortal body, and, borne by angels, ascended to the heavenly Jerusalem, where, crowned with the glories purchased for him by the Lord Jesus Christ, he abideth for ever and ever in the presence of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords." He died on the 25th of August, 765.†

If it was supposed that the appointment of such a man as Bregwin to the primacy would put an end to the bitter controversy between the Augustinians and the cathedral party in Canterbury, the expectation was not realised; or, at all events, the controversy broke out afresh at his death. Upon the clergy of the cathedral the instructions they received from Cuthbert were not lost. They again concealed the illness of the archbishop; and he was buried before the passing bell was tolled. The Augustinians had been on the watch, they had armed their retainers. Jaenberht, their abbot, placed himself at their head. They were prepared to fight for and to seize the dead body of the archbishop. But when they found that, in spite of their watching, their precaution, and their recourse to arms, they had been outwitted by the clergy of the cathedral, their indignation knew no bounds; and in answer to the clergy, who maintained that they had the king's authority for what they had done, the monks threatened an appeal to the Pope.‡

We are not to suppose that the parties in this dispute

* Solomon's Song, ii. 11. iv. 8.

† Simeon of Durham. See Kemble, Cod. Dipl. i. lxxxvii.

‡ Elmham, 328.

were merely under the influence of a romantic sentiment; the controversy had relation to things material, and pecuniary considerations gave energy at least to the combatants. At every funeral a soul-sceat or payment was made to the church in which the interment took place, and a legacy was expected. When a person of high rank was buried, a king, an ealdorman, or a bishop, a mancus of gold, and sometimes a much higher sum was paid. We read, for instance, of a legacy or burial-fee which consisted of a bracelet, two golden crosses, with garments and bedclothes, — in another instance of thirty marks of gold, twenty pounds of silver, two golden crosses, two pieces of cloth set with gold and gems, — in another of a hundred swine and a sum of money to be paid annually.*

These were things which will be regarded, even in our own times, as worth contending for; but, at the period under consideration, the dead bones were more valuable than the precious stones. If the public could be persuaded to believe that the person buried was a saint, the remaining heathenism in the land would induce all that class of persons who now, in humble life, resort to some wise man, and who in the upper classes of society repair to the mesmeriser, to visit his grave in the expectation of miracles, which, from the narrative of Eadmer, we fear that the clergy of Canterbury took good care should be performed at the sepulchre of Bregwin. The pilgrims never left without a donation to his shrine.

* Turner, book viii. chap. xv.

CHAP. V.

JAENBERT.*

Jaenbert. 766.

There is not, that I am aware of, any account of the birthplace, parentage, or early years of Jaenbert.† We may presume that he received his education at St. Augustine's, where we have already heard of him as the abbot who armed his retainers, and led them to win by force the dead body of Archbishop Bregwin. The proceeding was characteristic; a bold commencement with an impotent conclusion; this describes the official life of Jaenbert. He was one of those who are eager to begin a fray, and easily disheartened on the first display of vigorous opposition.

When he found himself an object of ridicule to the chapter of the cathedral, he was loud in his threats, and talked much of what he intended to do. But the members of the chapter having carried their point, having broken the charm of ancient custom, with respect to the right of burying the archbishops, were ready for a compromise; and, as an act of conciliation, which would end a disgraceful controversy, elected Jaenbert to the vacant see. He was consecrated at Canterbury on the 2nd of February, 766; Egbert, archbishop of York, being, as is supposed, the consecrator.

* Authorities:—Chron. W.; Thorn; Radulph de Diceto; Florence of Worcester; Spelman's Concilia; Saxon Chronicle.

† He is called Lambert by Godwin, Collier, and Inett, after Gervas and Simeon of Durham. Jaenbert is the name in Stubbs. To a charter of King Egbert of ground within Rochester Castle, he signs Genberhtus, Archiepiscopus, and to a charter of the same prince of land at Hallynges, he signs Jaenberhtus, and likewise to the charter of gift of Bromleigh, and to one of Offa of Trottesclive; to a charter of Ethelbert of land in the city of Canterbury he signs Geanberht; he is called Jaenberht in another charter of Offa of lands given by him. But the archbishop did not in the charters write his own name; it was written by the scribe who drew up the document.

CHAP. V.

Jaenbert. 766. 786.

The great event of this episcopate is the conversion of the bishopric of Lichfield into a metropolitan see by Offa the king of Mercia and his witenagemot, and the consequent spoliation, with the loss of dominion, authority, and dignity, of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

In order to understand this rather complicated transaction, which is discreditable to all the parties concerned in it, we must briefly advert to the social position of an archbishop in the Anglo-Saxon period of our Church, and the vast powers which of right, or by the concession of public opinion, pertained to his office. His position in society was, according to the custom of the age, marked by the amount of his wer-gild, or of the fines assigned to offences against his honour, his person, and his property. A bishop was on the same footing as an ealdorman, reckoned at eight thousand thrymsas; an archbishop on the footing of an atheling or prince of the blood, at fifteen thousand. The breach of a bishop's security or protection, like the ealdorman's, rendered the offender liable to a fine of two pounds, which in an archbishop's rose to three. He that drew a weapon before a bishop or ealdorman was mulcted in one hundred shillings; before an archbishop in one hundred and fifty. Under Ina, an act of violence done in the archbishop's dwelling and the seat of his jurisdiction, was to be compensated with one hundred and twenty shillings, while the ealdorman was protected by a fine of only eighty; in this his dignity was placed on a level with that of the king himself. His mere word, without an oath, was like the king's, incontrovertible.*

But this was not all: there was a difference between the secular power of the bishops in England, generally

* The authorities may be seen in Kemble, Saxons in England, vol. ii. chap. viii., to whom I am indebted for the above statements.

CHAP. V. Jaenbert. 774.

speaking, and that exercised by the bishops in France. The Gallican bishops had their residences in the principal cities, and, supported by the burgesses, consolidated a power which rendered them formidable to the king; whereas, until the time of William the Conqueror, the bishops of the Church of England had their residences for the most part in monasteries erected in sequestered villages and secluded situations. The Archbishop of Canterbury was an exception to this rule. By the retirement of the King of Kent to Reculver, the archbishop's authority in the city was almost uncontrolled. The see was endowed with many and large estates, the charters in some instances being still in existence; and the landed proprietor enjoyed privileges and jurisdiction of the nature of royalties, many of the essential prerogatives pertaining to them being such as at the present time are regarded as belonging exclusively to the sovereign authority. The archbishop coined money in his own name and with his own effigy impressed upon it*: by his right of lord of the soen he could try and execute thieves found upon any of his estates,—and such was the weight of his influence that it has been observed by a secular historian† that the see of Canterbury imparted to the little kingdom of Kent a greater degree of integrity, than it could else have enjoyed, in conjunction with the powerful states of Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex.

Jaenbert passed from the second place in the kingdom to the first, when, after the fatal fight of Otford, the royal family of the Æscings became extinct.‡ Offa, the Mercian king, assumed the royal authority in Kent, and that

* For the almost royal state assumed by the Archbishops of Canterbury, see Alcuin, Op. i. 86, 234.

† Lappenberg. i. 247.

‡ If Alric did not perish at the battle of Otford, he sank into insignificance and was historically dead.

ancient kingdom was designed by him to form only a province of Mercia. How was the archbishop to act? Was he to submit? The royal family had no longer an existence; ought not the vacant throne to be occupied by the archbishop, the patriarch and the pontiff, as he was called, of England, and the de facto sovereign? This was a question which the circumstances of the times, and what was taking place on the continent, could not fail to suggest to many minds.

The patriarch of Rome had lately risen, or was now in the act of rising, from the position of a subject of the empire to that of a sovereign prince, — and this had been accomplished through the instrumentality of a king of the Franks. Jaenbert applied to the son of that king, of whom we shall speak under his historical name (not yet, of course, assumed), Charlemagne.* Between the kingdom of Kent and the Franks there had been always a friendly understanding, and the French king's court, at the present time, was filled with English thanes who fled from the oppression of Offa.† Charlemagne, the Frankish king, was not more of a foreigner to the people of Kent than Offa, the king of Mercia. In the then state of things there was, therefore, nothing unpatriotic in the wish entertained by the archbishop to exercise sovereign authority, like the Bishop of Rome, as the feudatory of Charlemagne, if he, who had rescued Italy from the despotism of the Lombard king, would save Kent from the tyranny of Offa "the terrible."

But Charlemagne had other work in hand. To protect Kent for the Archbishop of Canterbury would be not only to declare war against the powerful Offa, but to provoke hostilities with other Saxon princes; and so far from acceding to the archbishop's proposal, Charlemagne soon after formed a close league with the Mercian govern-

* Lingard, i. 73.

† Matt. Paris, Vit. Offæ Secundi, p. 21.

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ment. It would appear, however, that he did not betray the archbishop, or public notice would have been taken of the transaction. It is certain nevertheless that Offa was aware of the application; and Jaenbert had in consequence to encounter the hostility of an enemy, who was as unscrupulous in diplomacy, as he was powerful in war; who, if he preferred right means to wrong, when by the employment of right means his ends could be accomplished, hesitated not to involve himself in any amount of crime rather than leave undone what he had once determined to do.

The spirit of the age, public opinion, and his own superstition — for godless men are often superstitious — would prevent Offa from openly attacking the metropolitan of the south. He, too, looked to Italy, and took warning from the fate of Luitprand and Desiderius. If he attacked Jaenbert with an army, it was by no means certain, that the piety of Charlemagne might not fly to arms for the protection of the archbishop. But at the same time it was evident that the power of the metropolitan was too great for a subject to possess; and to reduce the authority within limits, which would prevent the assumption of sovereign rights by the archbishop, was an object justifiable and reasonable. There was also one very plausible argument to be produced: if Northumbria were a kingdom of sufficient importance to have a metropolitan, then assuredly a metropolitan could not be fairly denied to Mercia, which had now become the most powerful kingdom of the so-called Heptarchy. In the episcopate of Archbishop Theodorus it was ruled, that overgrown dioceses should be divided; the same argument would apply to a metropolitan see, when the suffragans or the populations of their respective dioceses had increased. The measure seems never to have been popular, or to have commended itself to the better judgment either of the clergy

or the laity. But the will of Offa was not to be resisted with impunity, and he obtained the consent of his bishops and the witenagemot to convert Lichfield into an archiepiscopal see. The immediate consequence was the seizure of all the property belonging to the Archbishop of Canterbury in the kingdom of Mercia, for the purpose of attaching it as an endowment for the new metropolitan. Jaenbert. 786.

The sees were duly assigned to the new archbishop; but the Archbishop of Lichfield could not be on an equality with the metropolitans of Canterbury and York, unless he appeared in public arrayed in the pallium. It was taken for granted that the pallium could be granted only by the Pope; and would the Pope sanction the proceedings of the king and the witenagemot of Mercia by acceding to the royal request? * It was a question to be decided in the Roman Curia, and the favour was not so easily obtained as the king expected. As the pallium had been sent to the Archbishop of Canterbury, it seemed like self-stultification to confer the like honour upon a prelate who was in rebellion against him; and, in the progress of Roman usurpation, the conduct of Offa and his witenagemot in establishing the archbishopric, without first applying for the permission, or at least for the sanction of the Roman see, must have excited feelings hostile to the royal applicant for papal favour. But Offa was not a man to be baffled; he was determined that his archbishop should have a palliuin. The sums of money he spent to carry his point were enormous †; and the officials being gained, the case was laid before the Pope.

* The Peterborough Chronicle says expressly that he obtained his pall to *complete* his archiepiscopal dignity. See Chron. Angl. Petrob. p. 8, cited by Soames, Latin Church, p. 154.

† Malmesbury, Gest. Pontif. "Data pecunia infinita, a sede Apostolica quæ nulli deest pecuniam largienti, licentiam impetravit."—*Matt. Paris. Hist. Ang.* 155.

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There was now on the papal throne one of the most distinguished statesmen of the age, who had not only won the respect, but conciliated the affection of Charlemagne. He was aware of the friendly feeling which existed between Offa and Charlemagne, and was willing to oblige the Mercian king; and he was not at the same time unwilling to cause the increased powers of the papal see to be felt and acknowledged in England. What Boniface had succeeded in accomplishing in Germany; what, through Charlemagne, Hadrian hoped to effect in France; what Cuthbert had been unable to persuade the English Church to adopt, was the real recognition of a supreme power in the see of Rome. Hadrian saw that an opening was afforded, of which he adroitly availed himself. Would Offa permit two legates to appear in Mercia, there to hold a council and to make regulations for the church, disorganised by the late proceedings? Offa willingly consented; and this consent, more valuable than his silver and his gold, was the price which he really paid for his pallium.

Jaenbert had retired to Canterbury defeated and chagrined. Here in 785 he received a visit from Wighod, the ambassador of Charlemagne, king of France, who with George, bishop of Ostia, and Theophylact, bishop of Todi, legates from Hadrian, pope of Rome, were on their way to the court of Offa. They did not stay long, for, although received with civility, they knew that they were unwelcome guests. Jaenbert accepting the grand historical error, at this time generally received in the West, that the Pope of Rome was the successor and representative of St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, did not resent the aggression upon his province, although he was still prepared to resist the measure which the legates had come to countenance, though not openly to support. The legates themselves were evidently doubtful of the reception they were likely to meet; they came,

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therefore, with the ambassador of Charles, king of the Franks, whose name, as the greatest sovereign in the world, was already known and respected.

But, to their surprise and delight, wheresoever they went, the legates and the ambassador were well received. The Anglo-Saxons were pleased and flattered by an embassy from the two great sovereigns of the day; and if some there were, who, in their patriotism, regarded the foreigners with suspicion, the religious world, under the influence of passion rather than of reason, connected all their sentiment and enthusiasm with the shrine of the apostles said to be at Rome, and were as eager, in those days, to welcome the emissaries of that see, as in our own time they would be vehement in opposing them. The legates and the ambassador from France were under the impression, then universally prevalent among thinking men, that a great effort should be made to unite every branch of the Christian Church, and that the centre of unity was to be found in the Pope of Rome. This, for many years to come, we shall find to be the prevalent idea; and, because the attempt resulted in riveting those chains of superstition, which were rent asunder at the Reformation, we are not to do injustice to men who laboured to carry into effect a principle which, viewed from the theoretical side, and before it was tested by experience, appeared to be consistent with sound policy, and (as the Saracens were pressing the Church on every side) almost the only ground of security. The legates kept steadily before them, as conscientious men, the one object which they had in view, namely, to establish a precedent. They took no part in the great controversy between Lichfield and Canterbury, but merely recommended a strict adherence to the canons of the Church and the precepts of morality; they were not overbearing, they made no demands on the purses of the people, and

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although their assumption of superiority was a part of their mission, they were conciliatory, and sought rather to suggest than to dictate. The archbishop heard of their warm reception at the court of Offa, and of their proceeding to the north of England, where again they were hospitably entertained by the King of Northumbria, and received with honour by the Archbishop of York; of their having attended a meeting of the witenagemot, and of their being welcomed by the nobles and the clergy. Northumbria united with Mercia against the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Mercia was now closely connected with Wessex. The little kingdom of Kent, tributary to Mercia, was not likely therefore to make a successful stand against all the great powers of the Heptarchy. Still the archbishop was determined to maintain his own; and he possessed the sympathy of his suffragans, even of those generally, who, situated in the kingdom of Mercia, were constrained by Offa to support the disruption of the province.

Jaenbert was now summoned by Offa to a convention to be held at Cealchythe or Calcuith*; this is sometimes called a gemot, and at other times a synod. The fact is that either title is correct; for these were not separate courts. It was the custom under the Saxon kings, first to hear ecclesiastical pleas, next pleas of the crown, and then complaints of individuals one against another. The same persons (as when the House of Commons at the present time forms itself into a committee of the whole house,) may have heard all of the pleas, but under a different character. At the synod the legates appeared; and they produced a body

* Ingram says that this is Chalk, in Kent. Lingard supposes it to be Chelsea. There is a place called Culcheth, in Lancashire, not far from Warrington, which would be in what is called the old diocese of Lichfield. See Johnson, vol. i. p. 265; Spelman, 291.

of canons very similar to those that had been accepted in the kingdom of Northumbria, which are little more than a repetition of the regulations made at the council of Cloveshoo in the time of Archbishop Cuthbert.

All that the Italians desired was to establish a precedent for the appearance of legates from the see of Rome at a synod of the Church of England. This, however, they did not succeed in doing; for, during the whole of the subsequent Anglo-Saxon period, no legates from the Pope took part in the proceedings of our Church or visited England. The legates, nevertheless, had travelled with their eyes open; they had observed too much of gaiety in the monasteries, and one of the canons, the enactment of which they suggested, was that monks and nuns should behave themselves regularly, both as to diet and apparel, avoiding "the dyed colours of India and precious garments;" and on the other hand, they had observed much carelessness among the secular clergy, and proposed a canon which forbids ministers to celebrate the sacred offices with naked legs; which orders the faithful to offer *bread* for the service of the Holy Communion, and not *crusts;* and which forbids chalices made of horn. The children of nuns were also to be disinherited, which evidently implies the power of any one who had entered a nunnery to change her mind and to marry, as had hitherto been the custom.

It appears, from the proceedings of this council, that the English were accustomed to imitate their heathen forefathers in the cut of their clothes: we know that it was long before tattooing was discontinued. They disfigured their horses by splitting their nostrils, tying their ears together, and cutting off their tails. They also continued to eat horseflesh, against which there were frequent enactments, as the practice was connected with Saxon idolatry. The twentieth canon is a discourse on the

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nature and necessity of repentance, in which it is stated that those who depart out of this world without repentance and confession, could not benefit by the prayers of the Church.

When the synod was concluded, the convention formed itself into a gemot, at which the legates were not, it would seem, permitted to be present. Here the partition of the province of Canterbury was finally arranged; and, after much angry debate, Jaenbert was compelled to release from their oath of canonical obedience all of his suffragans, except the bishops of Rochester, London, Selsey, Winchester, and Sherburn. Entirely to cripple the Archbishop of Canterbury, and prevent any further pretension on his part to sovereign power, Offa directed his son to be elected King of Kent, which was accordingly done.* When all was over, the king, in the fulness of his heart at having carried his point in completely mortifying Archbishop Jaenbert, desired the legates to acquaint their master that he should become an annual subscriber towards the fund raised to pay the expenses of divine service at St. Peter's Church at Rome, and for the support of indigent pilgrims who might visit that city. The sum he promised was small, but the donation has assumed an historical importance, as being the foundation of the Peter pence, of which we shall frequently hear.

In the contest to which we have referred, Jaenbert is sometimes asserted to have spared neither labour nor expense, but at other times his resistance is said to have been negligent and lukewarm.† He contended vehemently and then succumbed.

There was much to render his last years melancholy, if he were a man of piety, — and we have no right to doubt it, — for the prospects of his country were

* Henry of Huntingdon, 731. † Spelman, 303.

gloomy in the extreme. It is not to be supposed that the reigns of men such as Ethelbald and Offa who, with religious profession, sentiment, and munificence, united the grossest immorality, and a ferocity which was utterly inconsistent with the first principles of the Christian religion, could pass without injurious consequences to society; and from this period we may date the commencement of that deterioration of the country, both in learning and religion, which we shall have for a long period to lament. Archbishop Jaenbert could not hear without alarm of the descent made by the Northmen or Danes, upon the coast of Dorsetshire. They committed a few robberies, and killed the chief officer of the king, who, with his people, had gone from Dorchester to prevent their landing, unless the customary toll were paid. Although the archbishop could not foresee that these men were destined soon to overwhelm the whole island, yet he could not but regard them as harbingers of evil days to come.

In the summer of 790 the archbishop was carried in a litter to the grand entrance of that monastery from which, a few years before, in the pride of his power, a bold, daring man, he issued forth with his armed retainers, in defiance of all law, to attack that party of which he was now the head, and to demand the dead body of his predecessor. Thwarted and discomfited to the last, Jaenbert perceived that his orders to be buried at St. Augustine's would not be obeyed by his chapter if he died without the walls of the monastery, and he therefore sought an asylum in the place endeared to him by the recollection of younger and happier days. He commanded his stone coffin to be prepared: his episcopal robes were arranged in order by his bedside, never to be used again by living man: his soul was comforted by the psalms devoutly sung, and the lessons of scripture read to him,

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by brethren who could sympathise with him in his fallen fortunes, and who reverenced him for the loyalty he displayed to their house. On the 11th of August following he died, and was the last of the Anglo-Saxon archbishops who was buried at St. Augustine's. Thus ended an unseemly controversy.*

ETHELHARD.†

Ethelhard. 793.

On the death of Jaenbert, it was no easy matter for Offa to select a fit person to occupy the see of Canterbury; he could not trust a man of Kent, and, now that a metropolitan see was established at Lichfield, it seemed hardly consistent with even an appearance of justice, to force a Mercian upon the chapter of Canterbury; nevertheless, as we should expect from our knowledge of Offa's character, a person devoted to the Mercian interest was eventually appointed, although not till the year 793. The see of Canterbury was vacant for nearly three years, and we may presume there was much of intrigue and controversy before the king carried his point. The person at last selected was Ethelhard. He had been an abbot‡, and was consecrated as the successor of Jaenbert in the see of Canterbury, on the 21st of July, 793.

* Elmham, 335.

† Authorities: — Florence of Worcester; William of Malmesbury; Saxon Chronicle; Chronicle of Mailros; Alcuini Opera.

Aliases: — Adelardus, Dicet, Brompt., Chron. Petrob.; Adelhardus and Ethelredus, Chron. Mailr.; Ethelheardus, Hovéden; Acthelher, Simeon Dunelm.; Edelred, Hunting.; Edilbardus, Charta Cenulfi Regis, A. 801.

‡ "Hludensis." Sim. Dun. Perhaps abbot of Louth. William of Malmesbury makes him abbot of Malmesbury and Bishop of Winchester, but the chronological difficulties of such a supposition are insuperable.

His first public act was to assist in nominating prelates to attend the council which the emperor Charlemagne had commanded to assemble at Frankfort, one of the most important councils ever held in the West. CHAP V. Ethelhard. 793.

It is observable, and curious to observe, how completely the Gallican Church and Church of England were excluded from intercourse with and interest in the other parts of Christendom. Some amount of intercourse was indeed kept up with Rome by the frequent visits of prelates and pilgrims, but the minds of these visitors were occupied by the claims of business or the observances of superstition, to the exclusion of any interest in the controversies which raged between the East and the West, between Constantinople and Rome; and which distracted and weakened the only real opponents whom the popes of Rome had to encounter in their progress to that spiritual despotism they, for a long season, exercised in Europe.

From the commencement of this century, a controversy had existed, which had excited no interest in the Church of England, and very little in the Gallican Church, though its important results were the severance of Italy from the Byzantine empire, in connection with establishment of the Western Empire, and of the temporal power of the Pope.

The principle had been enunciated by Gregory the Great, that pictures and images might be employed for the purpose of exciting devotional feelings, and of instructing the simple and unlettered; but that care was to be taken against the worship of them, a danger which he foresaw, and against which he sought by this injunction to make provision.* Until the close of the sixth century this principle was observed, but, by degrees, the superstitious veneration for images and pictures of our blessed Lord and the saints approached so nearly to the worship of them, that by Jews and Mahometans the Christians of

* Epist. lib. ix. Ep. 105.

CHAP. V. Ethelhard. 794.

the East were ridiculed as idolaters. In consequence of this, the Byzantine emperor, Leo the Isaurian, issued an order, in 726, prohibiting any reverence to images, and especially the custom which had been introduced of kneeling before them.* He did not indeed command their removal, but he required them to be so elevated as to render it impossible for them to be touched or kissed. His commands being disobeyed, in the year 729 or 730, he put forth another edict requiring their demolition.

The Bishop of Rome, Gregory II., although he was at that time only a subject of the Emperor, denounced these proceedings, and addressed letters to his royal master, with respect to which the reader finds it difficult whether most to admire the profound ignorance of history, the boldness of the assertions, or the violent and unchristian, and, if we may employ a modern term, the ungentlemanlike language employed.† The policy of the Emperor Leo was carried out by his son Constantine Copronymus, who convened a council at Constantinople in 754, composed of three hundred and thirty-eight bishops, chiefly Europeans. The deliberations continued for six months, and the decision was unanimous. The Fathers of Constantinople went so far as to assert that all images are the invention of the devil, and that they are idols in the same sense as those of the heathen. They anathematise all who would represent the Incarnate

* For an account of the Iconoclastic controversy the reader is referred to Neander, Gieseler, Milman, and Robertson. The imperial edicts are collected in Goldastus, "Imperialia decreta de cultu imaginum."

† He mistook Hezekiah, whom he calls Uzziah, for a wicked king; represents his destruction of the brazen serpent as an act of impiety, and asserts that David had placed the brazen serpent in the *Temple*. He addresses the Emperor thus: "These are coarse rude arguments, suited to a coarse rude mind like yours, but they contain the truth." The letters of Gregory are analysed by Dean Milman, ii. 159.

Word by material form or colours, and require them, on the contrary, to restrict themselves to the pure spiritual conception of the Christ, as He is seated, superior to the brightness of the sun, at the right hand of the Father. Instead of erecting lifeless images of the saints, men are exhorted to paint the living likenesses of their virtues on their hearts. An order was made for the removal of all images, whether statues or pictures, from the churches.

From this time, until the year 787, the Iconoclasts carried all before them in the East, although the example set in encouraging the worship of images by Pope Gregory II. was followed, with equal zeal, and scarcely more discretion, by his successor on the papal chair. But after a season a reaction took place in the Eastern church. The Empress Irene, although the most profligate and cruel of women, being stained by the blood of her own son, was a fanatic in the cause of image worship; and being eminent for her skill in intrigue, for her personal attractions, her power of mind, and her force of character, she overcame all difficulties, even the opposition of the army, and reversed the policy of preceding reigns through the instrumentality of the second Council of Nice, which she convened in 787. Three hundred and fifty prelates were present. Their grand argument against the Iconoclasts has the merit of being concise and syllogistic: "The Jews and Samaritans reject images; the Iconoclasts reject images; therefore the Iconoclasts are as Jews and Samaritans." * Their unanimous decision was, that, with the venerable and life-giving cross, shall be set up the venerable and holy images of Our Lord, of the Virgin Mary, of the angels, and of saints, whether in colours or in mosaic work, or in any other material, within the con-

* See Neander, v. 298.

CHAP. V. Ethelhard. 794.

secrated churches of God, on the sacred vessels and vestments, on the walls and on tablets, on houses and on highways; that to the sacred images bowing and all honourable adoration should be offered, but that this external and inferior worship was not to be confounded with the true and supreme worship which belongs only to God.

Hadrian, the Pope, was well pleased at the triumph of that party in the Church, to which he and his predecessors had attached themselves; and supposing that in the great man who was the patron, protector, and benefactor of the Roman see, the same party feeling had existence, he had the acts of the Council translated into Latin, and forwarded to Charlemagne. Although Charlemagne was a patron of the arts, and was, like Gregory the Great, desirous to make art subservient to the cause of religion, he nevertheless perceived, and was justly offended at what seemed to him, the approach to the sin of heathenism on the part of the second Council of Nice. Not only did Charlemagne and the Gallican clergy refuse to accept the acts of the council, but in the "Caroline Books" he exerted the wonderful powers of his mind to convict the Council of giving its sanction to idolatry, which, in every shape and form, he condemned. The work claims to be, and no doubt was, the work of Charlemagne himself, aided and advised by the learned men with whom he surrounded himself. In all matters of literature, and of religious controversy, we know that he was accustomed to consult our distinguished countryman, Alcuin. Alcuin was at this time in England, and England was the Athens of the West. To England Charlemagne looked for libraries and scholars. When Charlemagne sent, therefore, the several portions of his work to Alcuin to be criticised and corrected, Alcuin would naturally confer with the learned men in whose society he was seeking recreation and im-

provement. It is to this probably that we are indebted for the tradition in our Church, that of the work which appeared under the title of the "Quatuor libri Carolini," Alcuin was the author, and that he wrote it at the request of the clergy of the Church of England.* What has been stated is advanced, to account for the otherwise unaccountable fact that Charlemagne sent a copy of his work to Offa; and for the zeal and readiness with which the Church of England entered into Charlemagne's views, and actually sent its legates to the council convened at Frankfort. It was Charlemagne's ambition to make the council he assembled in the West as important and as imposing in its appearance, as that which had been assembled at Nice by the Empress of the East. On this ground, he ridiculed the notion of a female convening an ecclesiastical council and dictating in spiritual affairs, and he was employed for a considerable time in securing a large attendance of bishops, from all places subjected to his rule or influence.

He could not effect his purpose till the year 794. The council assembled in June, and was attended by a great number of bishops from every part of the Western Empire; from Italy, Germany, Gaul, Aquitaine, and England †, our countryman, Alcuin, at the king's own suggestion, being admitted to a place in the council, on account of

* The following is the statement of Simeon of Durham: "In the year 792, Charles, king of the Franks, sent to Britain a book containing articles agreed upon in a synod, which had been sent to him from Constantinople; in which book, oh shame! there were found many things repugnant and contrary to the true faith, and especially that it had been unanimously agreed to by three hundred, or even more, of the various bishops of the East, that images ought to be worshipped, a thing that the Church of God utterly abhors. Against this Albinus wrote an epistle, wonderfully confirmed by the authority of the Holy Scripture, and presented it with the same book in the name of our bishops and princes to the King of the Franks." Simeon, ad ann. 792.

† Mabill. Annall. Bened. ii. 311.

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the service he might be able to render by his learning. Charlemagne himself presided.

To give the more solemn importance to the council, and to make it a counterpart of the synods the Eastern emperors had been accustomed to convoke, the assembled Fathers assumed that the care of all the churches devolved upon them, and commenced their labours by anathematising the heresy of the Adoptionists which had lately arisen in Spain. They did by no means suppose, that the condemnation of the heresy which had already been pronounced by the Pope of Rome, superseded their functions, or rendered the exercise of them unnecessary. They then proceeded to condemn the Deutero-Nicene Council, and, although that council had received the sanction of Hadrian, and only promulgated the opinions of successive pontiffs of Rome, it was called a pseudo-synod. In like manner, although Hadrian had attempted to refute the arguments of the "Caroline Books," the council of Frankfort, on the ground that the attempt had failed, and that the arguments of the "Caroline Books" were irrefragable, condemned the worship of images, as being that which God's Church execrates, expressly including, under the term worship, adoration, and service of any kind.*

The attention of the new archbishop was soon afterwards called from foreign to domestic affairs. Ethelhard had maintained his position in the church of Canterbury during the first three years of his incumbency, supported by the authority of the terrible Offa, and of the sub-king his son; but when Egfrid in 796 followed his father to the grave, the troubles of the archbishop were of no ordinary kind.

In Mercia as well as in Kent the dynasty of Offa had ceased. In Mercia there was no difficulty in finding an

* For the canons of this synod see Conc. tom. vii. p. 103.

heir to the throne, and Kenulph was elected, being the descendant of another of the brothers of Penda. But the men of Kent conceived that, in the unsettled state of Mercia, they might once more assert their independence, and Eadbert, surnamed Pren, was elected their king. Although the Æscings were now said to have become extinct, yet this prince claimed to be collaterally connected with them; he was a kinsman also of Egbert, king of Wessex. A national party for three years rallied round him, to which the archbishop stood in opposition. Ethelhard, in the Mercian interest, advocated the establishment of a Mercian dynasty; Kenulph had ascended Offa's throne, and was, in the archbishop's opinion, the heir of Offa's dominions. The archbishop's unpopularity increasing, his life was, or he imagined it to be, in danger; he consulted therefore his friends, his chaplains, and immediate attendants, and, acting on their advice, the shepherd forsook his flock.

Ethelhard. 796.

He had formed the acquaintance of Alcuin during that great man's residence in England, and by Alcuin he was indirectly rebuked in terms of courtesy, dignity, and Christian simplicity. "What," he wrote, "can so humble a person as myself say but acquiesce in the advice of so many of Christ's priests? Yet if they have authority to persuade you that the shepherd ought to fly when the wolf comes, in what value do you hold the gospel which calls him a hireling, and not the shepherd who is afraid of the fury of the wolf:" he begs him earnestly to reconsider the motives of his flight; and however he might justify it by the text, "If they persecute you in one city, flee into another," to remember also "that the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep:" he advises that on his restoration the council of the realm should institute a national fast, as an act of public penitence on the part of the people for having occasioned it. "Return,"

CHAP. V. Ethelhard. 796.

he says, "and bring back to the house of God the youths who were studying there, the choir of singers, and the penmen with their books; that the Church may regain its comely order, and future primates may be trained up under her care. And for yourself, let your preaching be constant in all places; whether in presence of the bishops in full synod, whom it is your duty to admonish to be regular in holding ordinations, earnest in preaching, careful of their churches, strict in enforcing the holy rite of baptism, and bountiful in alms; or whether it be for the good of the souls of the poor in different churches and parishes, especially among the people of Kent, over whom God has been pleased to appoint you to preside. Above all, let it be your strictest care to restore the reading of the Holy Scriptures, that the Church may be exalted with honour, and that your holy see, which was first in the faith, may be first in all wisdom and holiness; where the inquirer after truth may find an answer, the ignorant know what he desires to know, and the understanding Christian see what may deserve his praise." *

When we place by the side of this admonition the fact that, when Ethelhard travelled through France, Alcuin went out of his way to warn the archbishop against giving offence to Charlemagne by the magnificence of his equipments and retinue, by their dresses of silk and ornaments of gold, we obtain an insight into the archbishop's character, and we are compelled to regard him as one who had more respect to the secularities of his office, than to his spiritual duties.†

Ethelhard, committed to the party of King Kenulph, was able to render considerable service to the cause he espoused. Eadbert Pren was in holy orders, and the

* Churton, 189. Wilkins' Conc. i. 159.

† Malmsb. Gesta Regum, i. 82.

archbishop excommunicated him, on the ground that the coronal tonsure incapacitated him for the kingly diadem. This was indeed a prevalent opinion in the Eastern empire, where princes were often condemned by the less unmerciful of their conquerors to the tonsure, and, as a punishment, were compelled to take holy orders, that their pretensions to empire might be for ever terminated. But in the Western Church it was a glaring inconsistency to refuse the crown to Eadbert Pren because he was a clergyman, when a clergyman had just before received sovereign power in Rome from the donations of Pepin and Charlemagne. But the inconsistency was not perceived at Rome. An excommunication by Ethelhard, a fugitive, unpopular prelate, whose deposition would have followed the hoped-for triumph of Eadbert Pren, was not likely to have much weight with the good people of Kent; but the people of Kent were always distinguished for their deference to the Roman See, and Ethelhard succeeded in getting his excommunication endorsed by the Pope. Still, however, politics were stronger than religion, and both pope and archbishop were defied. It was not till the subjugation of Kent by the victorious Kenulph, who defeated Eadbert Pren, took him prisoner, and, it is to be feared, mutilated him *, that Ethelhard was reinstated in Canterbury.

CHAP. V. Ethelhard. 798.

From this time to the end of his life all the energies of Ethelhard's mind were directed to procure the restoration of his dismembered province to its former dignity and extent. It would be neither interesting nor instructive to enter into the details of these proceedings, and we have nothing beyond a few dates to guide us in the intricacies of this passage of history, of which it is difficult

* The mutilation of Pren is denied by Ingram, who thinks the authority of the Sax. Chron. insufficient.

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to give a connected view.* He had powerful support, for Kenulph, wise in counsel as he was valiant in war, was ready to reward the political merits of Ethelhard by an act, which would at the same time conciliate the men of Kent and attach them to his dynasty. Our countryman Alcuin, who, though chiefly resident in France, was warm in the cause, induced his pupil Eanbald, now Archbishop of York, to co-operate with his brother of Canterbury, and addressed the people of Kent imploring them to receive with favour the archbishop whom they had driven into exile. But the proposal, which was popular in Kent, was less favourably received in Mercia. There was no open opposition, no declared opponent to the measure, but, somehow or other, difficulties were, from time to time, suggested to prevent its being carried into effect, or to impede its progress. We cannot but suspect that a secret and silent opposition was encouraged, if not organised, by Higbert, archbishop of Lichfield. The opponents of the restoration, without openly avowing their hostility, seem to have intimated that it would be to offer an insult to the Pope, if, without consulting him, a measure which had received his sanction should, without his sanction first obtained, be reversed. The conduct of the king and of the Archbishop of Canterbury was prompt and decided. Resolute as the Church of England had been, and for some time longer continued to be, against permitting an appeal to the Pope from the decision of a national tribunal or ju[illegible] it was, nevertheless, in accordance with the church prin[illegible] of the age to refer to the See of Rome when, in any disp[illegible] was agreed on both sides to abide by the decision of an umpire. It was proposed, therefore, to leave the matter in the hands of the Pope,

* The facts and dates are accurately given by Mr. Baron, the learned editor of Johnson's Laws and Canons, i. 287.

and to this proposition the opponents, who were merely employed in suggesting difficulties, could not object.

The concurrence of Leo III. was obtained, but still difficulties occurred to the complete accomplishment of the archbishop's design. After the year 799 Higbert ceased to sign with the title of archbishop, and in the same year Ethelhard was recognised as primate of all England by King Kenulph in a charter, by which he restores to the church of Canterbury the lands and property which had been abstracted from it by King Offa.* Nevertheless in the year 801 in a Witenagemot at Cealchythe, although Higbert signs with the title of bishop, he takes precedence of Archbishop Ethelhard.† The business of the gemot was chiefly secular, and as no act of the legislature had sanctioned the alteration in Higbert's position, his resignation of his metropolitan rights was not considered to involve the temporal dignity which the state assigned to his bishopric. But whatever the difficulty was, it was removed by Higbert himself, who determined, if he were deprived of his rights as metropolitan, no longer to retain the see. Where, or under what circumstances, he resigned, we are unable to state, but in the year 803, at the synod of Cloveshoo, he describes himself simply as abbot, and signs after Aldulf, bishop of Lichfield.

The synod of Cloveshoo was the triumph of Ethelhard. It lasted from the 9th to the 12th of October. The object for which it was convened was to restore the ancient splendour of the church of Canterbury, by the abrogation of the archiepiscopal see of Lichfield, and further to secure the liberties of the Church.

The final settlement of the primacy at Canterbury is an affair of so much importance in that department of

* Cod. Dipl. No. 1021. † Cod. Dipl. 1023.

CHAP. V. Ethelhard. 803.

history to which our attention is, in these pages, directed, that the document by which it was accomplished shall be presented to the reader.

"Glory to God on high, peace on earth to men of good will. We know (what is notorious, but what seems not at all pleasing to many who dwell in the nation of the English, that faithfully trust in God) that Offa, king of the Mercians, in the days of Jaenbert, archbishop, presumed by very indirect practices to divide, and cut in sunder the honour and unity of the see of our father St. Augustine, in the city of Canterbury; and how, after the death of the said pontiff, Archbishop Ethelhard, his successor, by the gift of divine grace, after several years, happened to visit the apostolical thresholds, and Leo, the blessed Pope of the Apostolical See, in behalf of many rights belonging to the churches of God. He among other necessary negotiations did also declare, that the partition of the archiepiscopal see had been unjustly made, and the Apostolical Pope, so soon as he heard and understood that it was unjustly done, presently ordered an authoritative precept of privilege, as from himself, and sent it into Britain, and charged that an entire restitution of honour should be made to the see of St. Augustine, with all the parishes belonging to it, according as St. Gregory, the apostle and master of our nation, settled it, and that it should in all respects be restored to the honourable archbishop Athelard, when he returned into his country. And Kenulf, the pious king of the Mercians, brought it to pass.

"1. And in the year of our Lord's incarnation 803, indiction the eleventh, the fourth of the Ides of October, I, Ethelhard, archbishop, with all the twelve bishops, subject to the holy see of the blessed Augustine, in a synod which was held by the apostolical precepts of the Lord Pope Leo, in a famous place called Cloveshoo, with the unanimous consent of the whole sacred synod, in the

name of Almighty God, and of all his saints, and by his tremendous judgment, charge that neither kings nor bishops, nor princes, nor any men who abuse their power do ever presume to diminish or divide, as to the least particle, the honour of St. Augustine, and of his holy see: but that it always remain most fully, in all respects, in the same honourable state of dignity as it now is, by the constitution of the blessed Gregory, and by the privileges of his apostolical successors, and as appears to be right by the sanctions of the holy canons.

"2. And now by the help of God, and of the apostolical Lord Pope Leo, I, Ethelhard, archbishop, and other our fellow-bishops, and all the dignitaries of our synod with us, do unanimously confirm the primacy of the holy see, with the standard of the cross of Christ, and we give this in charge, and sign it with the sign of the cross, that the see archiepiscopal from this time forward never be in the monastery of Lichfield, nor in any other place but the city of Canterbury, where Christ's church is, and where the Catholic faith first shone forth in this island, and where holy baptism was first celebrated by St. Augustine. Further also, we do by consent and licence of our apostolical Lord Pope Leo, forbid the charter sent from the see of Rome by Pope Adrian, and the pall, and the see archiepiscopal in the monastery of Lichfield, to be of any validity, because gotten by surreption, and insincere suggestions. Therefore we ordain, by canonical and apostolical muniments, with the manifest signs of the celestial king, that the primacy of the monarchy do remain where the holy gospel of Christ was first preached by the holy father Augustine, in the province of the English, and was from thence, by the grace of the holy Spirit, widely diffused.

"But if any dare to rend Christ's garment, and to divide the unity of the holy Church of God, contrary to

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the apostolical precept, and all ours, let him know that he is eternally damned, unless he make due satisfaction for what he has wickedly done, contrary to the canons." *

The signatures to this document are exclusively clerical. But it is nevertheless certain that a general meeting of the witan took place at the same time †, for, as Mr. Kemble observes, an archbishopric established by a Witenagemot could only be abrogated by another,—not by a mere assembly of clergymen, however dignified and influential they might be.‡

Ethelhard now returned in triumph to his palace in Canterbury; and we remark as significant, that of the coins of this archbishop which are still in existence, one is stamped with the name of Offa, and others were struck in the reign of Kenulph: on the coin bearing the name of Offa, Ethelhard is called Pontifex, upon the others Archiepiscopus.§

While Ethelhard was labouring with success to regain the forfeited honour of his province, he was equally diligent in providing for the government of his diocese. His exile at one time, and his frequent absences on the business of the province at other times, probably suggested to him the introduction into the Church of England of the important office of archdeacon.

The office of archdeacon had existed in the Church from an early period, but, in Western Europe, diocesans, when disabled or disqualified from officiating in person, were generally represented by chorepiscopi. The chorepiscopi, however, had been found to cause some trouble in France, where, towards the close of the eighth century, arch-

* Johnson, Laws and Canons, i. 296; Spelman, i. p. 324; Wilkins, i. 166.

† Cod. Dipl. No. 186.

‡ Kemble, Anglo-Saxons, ii. 248.

§ Rudiñg, iv. 279.

deacons, if not for the first time, appointed, were invested with a new character and importance. In each diocese several archdeaconries were created; the archdeacons receiving subordinate jurisdiction, without being able to assume the authority which pertains only to the episcopal order. Ethelhard, the correspondent of Alcuin, was likely to follow this useful example; at all events as an archdeacon is mentioned for the first time in his episcopate, we must assume for him the honour of this wise innovation.

In following the fortunes of distinguished individuals, we are frequently led to the observation, that when a man has realised the object of a worldly ambition, to which he has devoted his life, his life terminates before he can enjoy what he seems to have realised; having sown to the wind, it is, after all, only the whirlwind that he reaps. In 803 Ethelhard was rejoicing in the successful termination of his labours, and in 805 the see of Canterbury was again vacant. He was buried by his own direction in the cathedral of Canterbury, in the new church or chapel of St. John the Baptist.*

WULFRED.†

When Ethelhard instituted the archdeaconry of Canterbury, he nominated Wulfred to be the first occupant of that important office.‡ It was the policy of the Mercian

* Gervase, 1642. William of Malmesbury, however, who is followed by Elmham, asserts that he was buried at Malmesbury. Elmham, 339. There is doubtless a confusion of two distinct persons.

† Authorities: — Florence of Worcester; Matthew of Westminster; Chron. Mailros; Chron. Petrob.

‡ His name appears as Archidiaconus on two charters, see Cod. Dipl. 189 and 1024.

CHAP. V. Wulfred. 805.

king, at the death of Ethelhard, to conciliate the people of Kent, by appointing as his successor in the metropolitan see, a dignitary of the church of Canterbury. He might place entire confidence in the nominee of so decided a party man as the late archbishop had proved himself to be. Wulfred was named by Kenulph to the chapter, and by them gladly elected. He was a good, easy, prudent man; equally intent on serving his own family, and on improving the property and estates of the chapter and of the see, to which the local historians state that his benefactions amounted to twenty-nine.* His consecration seems to have taken place between the 1st and 6th of August, 805, when a council was sitting at Ockley, and there were probably not fewer than twelve bishops assistant.†

He went to Rome for the pallium, the policy of the Roman court being to encourage visits which caused the circulation of money among the citizens, and created on the part of the postulant metropolitans an undefined feeling of dependence on the Roman See. ‡

It was with feelings of deep interest that the Archbishop of Canterbury set out on his journey to the imperial city. For strange stories had reached England with respect to Leo III., the reigning Pope. It was reported and believed that the Romans had cut out the tongue of Pope Leo, that they had put out his eyes, that they had driven him from his see, and that he soon after, by a miracle, was able both to speak and see, and, says the chronicle, "was again Pope as he was before." When Archbishop Wulfred arrived in Rome he heard a plain statement of the case. The nephews of the late Pope Hadrian, Paschal and Campulus, through Papal nepotism, of which this

* Gervase, 1642, says that he granted certain lands to his nephew to be held by him during life.

† Cod. Dipl. 190.

‡ Gervase, 1642.

perhaps is the earliest instance recorded, had been advanced to high offices in the Church, the one being Primicerius and the other Sacellarius. These men took umbrage at the election of Leo to the papal throne, and waiting patiently till a fitting opportunity for action should occur, they organised a faction, and in 799, with their mob, rushed upon Leo, as he rode in solemn pomp, heading a procession through the streets of Rome. They put his attendants to flight, they unhorsed the pontiff himself, threw him on the ground, and there they attempted to deprive him of his eyes and tongue. This fearful punishment by mutilation was common at Constantinople, but was rare in the West, although resorted to as we have seen on one occasion by King Kenulph. From want of skill in the Roman barbarians, or by the sturdy resistance of the Papal victim, this cruel attempt to incapacitate, for his office, one whom they were superstitiously afraid to murder, had not succeeded. His persecutors then dragged the Pope into a neighbouring church; and instigated by the ecclesiastics Paschal and Campulus, the people beat him with sticks until they left him weltering in his blood, half dead. In this condition they then carried him to a monastery, and cast him into the convent prison. He recovered from his wounds. Many crimes were laid to his charge, in justification of the treatment he had received. Charlemagne came to Rome to preside over the court by which the Pope was to be tried. On his trial the Pope succeeded in exculpating himself, and his accusers were condemned. The horrible barbarity and the wonderful escape were exaggerated, until the exaggeration, through the natural progress of falsehood, settled down into a miracle.

When Wulfred was at Rome, Leo was enjoying the fruits of his triumph, and was making the most of his short-lived popularity. His expenditure was now profuse,

CHAP. V. Wulfred. 806.

and in the indulgence of his taste for the beautiful, he found sympathy in his people, until his munificence became extravagance, and then they who admired his splendour demurred to the liquidation of his debts. The Archbishop of Canterbury beheld with admiration buildings lined with mosaics, clergy arrayed in robes of silk, bishops with their mitres studded with precious stones. He also looked with astonishment at the splendid images of silver and gold before which, in spite of the decisions of the Council of Frankfort, those of the Italians who were regarded as devout and pious, were seen to kneel and pray.

812-815. It is said that Wulfred made a second visit to Rome to solicit the interposition of the Pope in reference to the treatment he received from Kenulph, whose favour the archbishop forfeited, by claiming the restoration of a certain manor abstracted from the church of Canterbury by Offa.

The appeal of Wulfred to a foreign potentate very justly excited the indignation and anger of Kenulph. He had committed the same offence as that by which Jaenbert was involved in all his trouble. The king summoned the archbishop before a council at London, and threatened him publicly, that unless he surrendered to him and his heirs the manor in dispute, he would banish him the kingdom, and would not listen to any appeal in his favour, whether made by the Pope or by the Emperor himself, Charlemagne having at that time assumed the empire.** The king obtained possession of the manor, and the archbishop seems to have submitted in silence.

It is said that the king suspended the archbishop

* Evidentiæ Eccles. Ch. Cant., Twysden, 2211. Both Lappenberg and Lingard relate the circumstance, but the former remarks on its inconsistency, with the praise so liberally bestowed upon Kenulph by the Chroniclers.

from the exercise of his archiepiscopal authority for six years; but although we are not disposed to discredit the story of the quarrel entirely, we suspect that its character has been greatly exaggerated; and although the angry words attributed to Kenulph may have been uttered, they were probably uttered only in private, and were not repeated by Wulfred before the king's death.

Of Archbishop Wulfred it is said by Godwin and Parker that although he held the archbishopric for more than twenty-eight years, he did nothing worthy of record. This is true with respect to his personal conduct, yet events occurred during that period, of so much influence on the character and position of his successors, that, although they belong to the general history of England, they must not be permitted to pass unnoticed.

We must date from this period the decay of piety and the decline of learning in the Church of England, which ere long afflicted the heart, and occasioned the reforms, of the patriotic Alfred. A long course of prosperity, uninterrupted by foreign invasion and little impeded by occasional domestic feuds, had led to the demoralisation of the country, as we have seen it exhibited in the courts of Ethelbald and Offa, and as we discover it in the enactments of the various ecclesiastical synods.

Few persons seem to be aware of the amount of prosperity enjoyed by our ancestors after the fusion of the British and Anglo-Saxon races, and before the invasion of the Danes. Nearly the whole of the southern part of our island was at that time under cultivation; and William of Poictiers speaks of England, at a later period, as the storehouse of Ceres.* Rye, barley, wheat, and oats were grown, and the orchards were prolific with cider. The grapes were acid and the wine was coarse; but Smith-

* Guil. Pictav. 210.

CHAP. V. Wulfred. 822.

field and Holborne were vineyards from which the cellars of London were filled, while the other provinces regaled on the vines of Gloucestershire and Essex. The hum of bees was heard in various parts of the country, and their whereabouts is indicated by the name of "Mells." Honey was a valuable article of produce and commerce, being manufactured into sugar and mead. There appears to have been a wild pony natural to the island*, and English horses were in demand in the foreign markets. Although they were never much employed by the Anglo-Saxons in military service, we may presume that field sports required the maintenance of steeds, and fox-hunting was popular not only with the thanes, but, as we learn from Alcuin, with the clergy and monks of Northumbria.

The population of the country being small, there were still in existence large hunting-fields, from which the wild animals paid tribute to the tables of the luxurious, while, beneath forests of oak and beech, the serfs and slaves were watching the swine which formed the animal food of the masses. In the plains were herds of cattle to supply the large demand for leather, when leather was required not only for shoes and breeches, but for gloves, with which even the common people were obliged to cover their hands before they ventured to penetrate the thick entangled wood. Eels, in abundance, supplied the midland districts, and fisheries were established on all the coasts. On the coast resided the merchants, whose social position was as high as it is at the present time. The successful trader had a right to the rank and privileges of a thane, and the laws made for the encouragement of commerce show how highly commerce was esteemed.

The basis of all our improvements in the manufacturing

* We frequently find it stated in the Saxon Chronicle that the Danes, as soon as they had landed, *horsed* themselves; they caught these wild animals.

districts at the present time is iron. Whenever a manufacturer or a mechanic gets an idea into his head, he goes to the implement-maker to help him to carry it out. And even in the Anglo-Saxon times, though for a different reason, iron was the basis of our wealth. It was an age when every man's hand was against his brother; when all Europe was one vast battle-field; when in the most retired district none but an ecclesiastic, and in many districts not even he, could go unarmed. Swords, battle-axes, halberds, javelins, spears, arrow-heads, all kinds of missile weapons, in addition to defensive armour, head-pieces, greaves, and shields, were everywhere in demand, and the possession of iron was better than the possession of gold. There can be little doubt that it was this, in addition to the surface gold, that rendered Britain such a valuable colony of ancient Rome. Pennant, in his history of Wales, adduces authentic evidence to prove that the Romans established ironworks in the forest of Dean in Gloucestershire. Iron foundries existed also in Sussex and Kent at a very early period. The ironworks in the northern and midland counties were not opened until centuries after these had been in operation. The ironworks in Sussex were not abandoned till 1776*, and then not from want of ore, of which we still possess an ample supply, and of superior quality, but because, in the expense of smelting it, it was impossible to compete with the coal-fields in the north. In the counties of Sussex and Kent, timber or wood was almost indigenous, and hence in the Anglo-Saxon times, when wood alone was employed in furnaces, the value of coal being scarcely known, the southern counties were what the mining districts of the north have subsequently

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* There are still many ponds in the weald of Sussex called hammer-ponds, pointing out the spots where iron used to be smelted. Knox, Rambles in Sussex.

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become. To these sources of wealth must be added the plentiful supply of flint; flint being employed, instead of iron, in many of the missiles of war, though requiring the use of iron to shape and point it.

These remarks are rendered necessary to account for that which surprises us at first, the rapid advance and equally rapid decay of prosperity among the Anglo-Saxons. Prosperity such as we have described, if the fine arts be not at the same time introduced and the taste cultivated, is sure to sink the prosperous into the grossest sensuality, and to brutalise the mind, unless it be controlled by the morality as well as the sentiment of religion. In our allusions to the courts of Ethelbald and Offa, we have seen the decay of morals among public men; and the evil example set by the great was the more injurious, from the conformity of the royal criminals to the church, and the readiness evinced by worldly ecclesiastics to account their benefactions as compensating for their crimes.

From the court, corruption descended to the monasteries. It had been the wisdom of Theodorus to convert the chief monasteries into schools of learning, and these institutions were, for a season, a blessing to the land; but when zeal for learning declined, they became very much what the colleges would be in our present universities, if they were no longer places of education. From the beginning, the monasteries of England had with few exceptions been free, and in their corruption they became lax. With laymen chiefly for their abbots, they became at first agreeable country-houses, replete with all the appliances of learning and pleasure, but afterwards they gradually degenerated into abodes of idleness and dissipation. Incentives to evil are sure to succeed rapidly on the removal of intellectual restraints or religious excitement. The demand for monastic reform was everywhere on the

increase among that portion of the community which was still earnest in the cause of vital Christianity and the religion of the heart. It was first raised by Bede; it was repeated by Alcuin; it was urged in the time of Wulfred; but among the evils of the time, the inactivity of the primate, and, in consequence, of his suffragans, was one of the greatest. We do not indeed find complaints made of the rapacity and injustice of the English prelates,—charges brought against the French hierarchy in its dealings with monastic institutions,—but there was a carelessness and negligence in enforcing the regulations enacted with a view to reform, from time to time, at the provincial councils. Religion itself was emasculated, as we gather from the popular legends; and instead of forming that manliness of character which nerves the true Christian to acts of noble daring, superstition brought down the once high-spirited Saxons to a condition of imbecility which would have incapacitated the English race from becoming what we see it to be, if the arm had not been nerved to resist the horrors of a foreign invasion, and if new blood had not been infused into the veins by the fusion of Danes with Anglo-Saxons, through a peaceful process, to which we shall have frequent occasion to refer.

But that degeneracy in animal courage which rendered the demoralised Anglo-Saxon an easy prey to the Dane led, nevertheless, to one great result. The incapacity of the rulers and the effeminacy of the people enabled the noble few, under the leading of a clear-sighted, energetic, and generous prince, to bring the discordant elements of the Heptarchy into harmony and order, and in the King of Wessex to establish a monarchy in England.

Egbert, driven from his country in youth, passed many years of his life in the court and camp of Charlemagne. When he was recalled and elected to the throne of Wessex,

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he returned to his country imbued with the principles of the great Emperor, and endowed with talents for ruling in peace and for commanding in war scarcely inferior to those which, in a wider field, raised his instructor in the art of governing to the highest pinnacle of human greatness. We have before remarked on the tendency to amalgamation which, from an early period, had been manifested among the various members of the Germanic races by whom the island had been subdued. It was proclaimed in the undefined and undefinable title of Bretwalda: there was frequently a king who hoped himself, and was by the people expected, to become the head of the one kingdom into which all other sovereigns were to be absorbed. But, one after another, they failed, and they failed for this reason, that their sole dependence was upon the force of arms. The influence of wealth came in to secure the prize for the crown of Wessex. Egbert having first consolidated his power in his hereditary dominions, and having resisted the influx of corruption into his court and gemot, made himself master of Mercia and Northumbria with their dependencies; and although he and his immediate descendants contented themselves, for a time, with the title of kings of Wessex, leaving vassal princes in possession of some provinces of the empire, Egbert nevertheless was *de facto* king of England — the Basileus.

While these revolutions were in progress, Wulfred was enjoying his *otium cum dignitate* in Canterbury. A good easy man, he took it for granted that all things were going on prosperously, because he did not take the trouble to provoke opposition by interference: and he was complacent in the flattery of his chapter, to whose property he made considerable additions.*

* See Somner, Dart, Hasted, and the local historians.

The one exception to the episcopal indolence of twenty-eight years is found in the archbishop's convention of a synod in the earlier part of his career at Cealchythe, a place in which many previous councils had been held. It was convened under Kenulph in 816, and some of the canons are valuable as illustrating the manners of the age. The following relates to the consecration of a church:—"When a church is built, let it be consecrated by the bishop of its own diocese; let the water be blessed and sprinkled by himself, and all things be thus accomplished in order, according to the ministerial book. Afterwards let the Eucharist, consecrated by the bishop in the same ministration, be laid up in the same repository with the other relics in the Basilica, *i. e.* the church; and if he can find no other relics, this may serve as well, because it is the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. And we charge every bishop, that he have it written on the walls of the oratory, or in a Bible, as also on the altars, to what saints both of them are dedicated." *

The canon which relates to the monasteries runs thus:—"That every bishop have power of electing the abbots and abbesses in his own diocese, with the consent and advice of the family; and let diligent inquiry be made by all, that the innocency of such an one (as is to be chosen) be freed from all imputation of capital crimes; that is, that he be not defiled with homicide, or begetting children, or with grievous public theft; but that he have led his life regularly, and within the cloisters of a monastery. (Let him be) prudent and acute in speech, lest the flock committed to him (suffer) for his folly and silence, and let the bishop look to it, lest he be chosen out of favour, or affection, or for a sum of money, or out of greater respect for kindred than ought to be, nor let it

* Johnson, Laws and Canons, i. 301.

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be done at all without the consent of the family, nor let the family (do it) without consent of the bishop; but let them set about it conjointly and orderly in all respects."

The law laid down for the funeral of bishops is also remarkable:—"And we firmly ordain it to be observed in our times, as well as those of our successors who may, in any future times, be ordained in the sees in which we now are, that when any bishop passes out of the world, then, according to our precept, a tenth part of his substance be given for his soul's sake in alms to the poor; of his cattle and herds, of his sheep and swine, and also of his provisions within door; and that every Englishman (of his) who has been made a slave in his days be set at liberty; that by this means he may deserve to receive the fruit of retribution for his labours, and also forgiveness of sins. Nor let any person oppose this point, but rather let addition be made to it by successors as it ought; and let the memory of such an one be always kept and honoured in all churches, subject to our jurisdiction, with divine praises. (As soon as a bishop is dead) let prayers and alms forthwith (be offered) according to what is agreed among us, viz., That at the sounding of the signal in every church throughout our parishes, every congregation of the servants of God meet at the Basilica, and there sing thirty psalms together for the soul of the deceased; afterwards, let every prelate and abbot sing six hundred psalms, and cause one hundred and twenty masses to be celebrated, and set at liberty three slaves and give three shillings to every one of them, and let all the servants of God fast one day; and for thirty days, when the canonical hours are finished in the assembly, let seven belts* of paternosters also be sung

* The word "beltidum" is here obscure, for both Spelman and Ducange in their glossaries refer only to this passage; and rosaries were certainly not in use at this time.

for him; and when this is ended, let his *obit* be renewed on the thirteenth day, as that of the apostles used to be on their birthday; and let them act with as much fidelity in this respect, in all churches, as they do, by custom, for the faithful of their own family, by praying for them, that by the favour of common intercession, they may deserve to receive the eternal kingdom, which is common to all saints."* Immersion in baptism is also enjoined:—"We give the same in charge to priests, that no one covet more business than is allowed him by his proper bishop, excepting only in relation to baptism and the sick; but we charge all priests, that they deny nowhere to perform the ministry of baptism; and if any one do refuse it through negligence, let him cease from his ministry, till the time of correction, and that he be reconciled to his bishop by humble satisfaction. Let priests be taught when they minister baptism not to pour water on the heads of the infants, but that they be immersed in the font; as the Son of God hath in his own person given an example to all the faithful, when he was thrice immerged in Jordan. In this manner it ought to be observed."†

In making these extracts we must not omit a canon which breathes in it a Christian spirit such as was characteristic of Wulfred, whose fault was not want of piety, but want of sufficient energy to meet the exigencies of his place and the times:—"That a settled unity and devout inward peace and charity remain amongst us; that all have but one will, in deed and word and judgment, without flattery or dispute, because we are fellow-servants in one ministry, fellow-workers in one building, members of one body, of which Christ is the head; therefore it becomes us, as we are joined together in one spirit by faith and love, to keep our words and actions free from

* Johnson, i. 306. † Johnson, i. 308.

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dissimulation, in the fear and love of God Almighty, and diligently to pray for each other, that by this means we may deserve to receive a crown which God hath promised to them that love him."*

We find Wulfred's name attached to several charters and documents relating chiefly to the church property. It is evident that he was an excellent man of business. In 811 his name appears as officiating at the consecration of Winchcombe abbey.†

He exercised the right of coining money, and his coins have his own effigies on the obverse, on the reverse of his coin his moneyer's name appears with the place of mintage.‡

Wulfred died on the 24th of March, 832 §, and was buried in the cathedral.

CEOLNOTH.‖

Feologild. 832.

Feologild was consecrated on the 9th of June, 832, to be the successor of Wulfred, but died on the 29th of the following August. His consecration gives him a place in the lists of the archbishops of Canterbury, but his brief occupancy of the see did not procure for him the notice of his contemporaries, and we inquire in vain who he was or whence he came. He is spoken of as an abbot in Kent, but over what monastery he presided no mention is made.

* Johnson, i. 301. † Cod. Dipl. 196.

‡ Ruding, iv. p. 279. We shall have occasion to speak more particularly on the subject of the coinage, when we come to consider the restraints on this privilege imposed on the archbishops by Athelstan.

§ The Saxon Chronicle fixes 829 as the date of Wulfred's death. There is, however, a charter signed by Wulfred so late as August 28, 831. Cod. Dipl. 227.

‖ Authorities:—Florence of Worcester; Asser, Vit. Ælf.; Ingulph; Gervase; Simeon of Durham; Chron. Mailr.; Hoveden; William of Malmesbury.

Ceolnoth. 833.

On his death the election of the chapter or the nomination of the crown designated one Syred to the vacant office, but he was in the grave before the day of his consecration arrived. The choice then fell upon Ceolnoth, passed over probably on the two former elections as being a younger man.*

As Wulfred was the first Archdeacon of Canterbury, so was Ceolnoth the first Dean.

Augustine on his arrival in England came attended by monks and clergy, the monks at that time being generally laymen. For the monks he designed the monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul (St. Augustine's), and he himself presided at Christ Church over the clergy. The monks were to be employed in the pursuits of literature, science, and education; the clergy were the practical men, engaged in the offices of the ministry. This was the custom of the missionary stations both in England and on the continent; and, with an exemption granted to the married clergy who formed a small minority, the clergy of the cathedral became the episcopal family, and presented the appearance of a monastic institution with the archbishop for its abbot.

This might answer admirably so long as the archbishop was engaged almost exclusively in missionary and clerical work; but when his increased powers and secular employments called him frequently from home, as in the instance of Ethelhard and Wulfred, the little family being left without a head fell into disorder. The same thing happened in France. In the absence of the bishops, the cathedral establishments contrasted unfavourably with

* There are some chronological difficulties with respect to these appointments (see Stubbs, p. 9). Mr. Stubbs, while giving us the dates here adopted, remarks that it is possible that Feologild and Ceolnoth may have been successively consecrated as coadjutors to Archbishop Wulfred.

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the Benedictine monasteries, where, under a resident abbot or prior, the rules were strictly enforced; and they gradually became in many cities, as we have seen in Canterbury, rival establishments. An attempt was made in the middle of the eighth century to effect cathedral reform by Chrodegang, archbishop of Metz; and, as he was one of the royal family of France, his labours, assisted by the government, were crowned with much success.

He gave to the cathedral clergy a canon or rule, from their pledge to observe which they were called canons.* As the monks were placed under the superintendence of a prior, so the canons were subjected to a dean. The bishop of the diocese retained, with reference to the cathedral canons, much the same position as the abbot in the monasteries. He was their visitor, and, when in residence, they were bound to repair to the chapter-house to receive his admonitions and instruction.

The rules which Chrodegang laid down for the guidance of the canons in cathedral churches were less stringent than those which Benedict had enforced upon his monks, although Benedict's rule was a relaxation of former discipline. They were to receive the communion every week, if not prevented by sin. They were enjoined to confess their sins to the bishop, and the bishop could order the infliction of corporal punishment,—men gathered together in those uncivilised times being like a set of schoolboys, the refractory requiring something more coercive than mere moral discipline. They had one house and one dormitory, each taking in turn the domestic arrangements and culinary offices. Being engaged in active

* There were certain of the cathedral clergy, the married men especially, who were not bound by the rule. To these a certain prebend was allowed for their support, and they were distinguished from the canons by the name of prebendaries.

life, their dietary was more generous than that of the monks. They were permitted to eat flesh and to drink wine and beer; to presbyters and deacons three cups were allowed at dinner and two at supper; for subdeacons two at each meal; for the servants two at dinner and one at supper. The arrangement seems extraordinary which takes for granted that a presbyter will be more thirsty than a subdeacon, and he than an acolyte or a serving-man. During meal-time, as was the case in monasteries and perhaps in well ordered private houses, edifying books were read. The great difference between canons and monks, however, was, that the former might, and that the latter might not, have property of their own.*

When we read of Ceolnoth being dean of Canterbury, the title informs us that the newly instituted order was introduced into that cathedral. The monkish historians, who were so bitterly opposed to cathedral establishments under secular canons, have not however condescended to give us the particulars. The time for the introduction of the new system was unfortunate, and the system was under Ceolnoth almost a failure, but this was the character of the cathedral chapter at Canterbury till the time of Lanfranc.

The Dean of Canterbury, according to Gervase, was consecrated archbishop on the 27th of August.

The episcopate of Ceolnoth is celebrated in ecclesiastical history on account of a certain charter granted by King Ethelwulf, to which reference has been made by some of our lawyers and historians as the donation of tithes to the Church of England. There is some doubt as to the precise date of the charter, but it is placed by the Saxon Chronicle in the year 855. It is thus given by William of Malmesbury:—"Our Lord Jesus Christ reigneth for evermore. Since we perceive that perilous times are pressing

* In the Codex Dipl. 200, we find a charter which allows the family of Christ Church to have property within the house.

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on us, that there are in our days hostile burnings and plunderings of our wealth, and most cruel depredations by devastating enemies, and many tribulations of barbarous and pagan nations, threatening even our destruction: therefore I, Ethelwulf, king of the West Saxons, with the advice of my bishops, and nobility, have established a wholesome council and general remedy; and I have decided that there be given unto the servants of God, whether male or female, or laymen, a certain hereditary portion of the lands possessed by persons of every degree, that is to say, the tenth manse*, but where it is less than this, then the tenth part; that it may be exonerated from all secular services, all royal tributes great or small, or those taxes which we call 'Witereden.' And let it be free from all things, for the release of our souls, and the obtaining remission of our sins, that it may be applied to God's service alone, exempt from expeditions, the building of bridges, or of forts; in order that they may the more diligently pour forth their prayers to God for us without ceasing, inasmuch as we have in some measure alleviated their service. Moreover, it hath pleased Alstan, bishop of Shireburn, and Swithun, bishop of Winchester, with their abbots and the servants of God, to appoint that every congregation of brethren and sisters at each church, every week on the day of Mercury, that is to say, Wednesday, shall sing fifty psalms, and every priest two masses, one for King Ethelwulf, and another for his nobility consenting to this gift, for the pardon and alleviation of their sins; for the king while living, they shall say 'O God who justifiest;' for the nobility while living, 'Stretch forth, O Lord:' after they are dead, for the departed king singly; for the departed nobility in common; and let this

* Manse implies generally a dwelling and a certain quantity of land annexed; sometimes it is synonymous with a hyde, or plough-land. Stevenson.

be firmly appointed for all the times of Christianity, in like manner, so long as faith shall increase in the nation of the Angles." *

A similar grant was made by Ethelwulf on his return from Rome in 857, to which we find a reference in a series of documents in the Codex Diplomaticus. But we are to bear in mind that an Anglo-Saxon king was only the chieftain of the people, not the owner of the soil. Although he possessed certain rights and claimed certain dues upon all property, he was only one among the landed proprietors. Ethelwulf could not give what he did not possess. He simply devoted to religious and charitable uses a tenth part of his private estates, and released from all payments due to him as king, a tenth part of the folclands, or lands unfranchised (excepting always the trinoda necessitas).† Upon every ten hides of his private property he also required one poor man to be maintained in food and clothing.‡ This is certainly a very different thing from an endowment of the church by the state; although there is a recognition of the duty of devoting a tenth portion of our property to the service of God, and of the poor. This principle was deduced from Scripture, and was supposed to be the mind of God, long before any rule on the subject was laid down, or any law enacted. The principle of making self-sacrifice, for the promotion of the divine

* William of Malmesbury, lib. ii. § 114. Cod. Dipl. 270, 271, 275, 1048, 1050. Compare Lappenberg, i. 197.

† The "trinoda necessitas" is thus described by Sir Francis Palgrave: "The payment of imposts required for the repairs of bridges and highways,—the contributions for keeping up the walls and fortifications of the strongholds,—and the military services required for the resistance of the enemy and the defence of the kingdom. Few grants were ever made without the reservation of the trinoda necessitas."—*Rise and Progress*, i. 156.

‡ Kemble, Anglo-Saxons, ii. 489.

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glory and the welfare of our fellow-creatures, is involved in Christianity itself. But since our Lord and Master does not require of every one that he should, in taking up his cross, forsake all; the question early arose as to the proportion of our property which ought to be devoted to the sustentation of religion and the relief of the poor. "Damus inde quamdam partem. Quam partem?"* "Decimam partem" was the reply of the primitive church: that is to say, in answer to the question how much? A reference was made to the Jewish law, not as being obligatory upon Christians, but as involving a principle to be applied according to circumstances. Hence the custom arose, among the first converts to Christianity in England, of dedicating to God's service tenths or tithes arising from things that give a yearly increase. But whether the tithes should be paid to the parish priest, to the abbot of a monastery, or to the prior, or whether they should be divided among them, or in what proportions, this, certainly for a considerable time, depended upon the sole will of the donor. The first laws on the subject related only to the payment of tithes, but not to their destination. Without any special enactment, the payment of tithes became gradually part of the common law of the land, and was as such enforced.†

Certain it is, that the notion is quite a modern one, that tithes are to be considered as the right of the clergyman residing in a particular parish, as payment for duty done. Tithes were regarded as the property of those corporations in the church to which they had been assigned by the first donors. A monastery or a cathedral chapter, or a clergyman in his capacity as a corporation

* Augustine, lxxxv. § 5: opp. ed. Migne, v. 522.

† In the Chronicle of Battel Abbey, it is stated that up to that time (1066), it was permitted to every one to pay his tithes where and to whomsoever he would. Chron. Mon. de Bello, p. 27. In 1195 the practice was restrained by a bull of Pope Celestine III.: Kennett, p. 11.

sole, received the property as a donation,—but not as of right, through charter, not through the common law. What the law did, was to secure the enjoyment of the property to the parties to whom the donation was made. The monastery or chapter, so endowed, was bound to see that the duty of the parish was performed, and to make any arrangement they might please with reference to the officiating minister. And so with respect to a corporation sole; a clergyman, until times quite modern, felt himself at liberty to receive property from the tithes of several parishes; the only question with which the public was supposed to be concerned was, whether, by himself or his deputy, the duties in the several parishes of which he possessed the tithes were properly discharged. This is said not as a defence of pluralities, which, whether defensible or not, are now abolished, but to account for the fact that, in the early or middle ages of the Church, no one seems to have had any compunction whatever, in accumulating preferment upon himself, or upon any institution he might favour. The tithes were regarded not as pay, but as property; and the proprietor of tithes was at liberty to make his own agreement with the deputy whom he appointed to perform the duties which the ownership implied. The question was, whether the duty was properly performed,—not by whom. The abuse of this species of property rendered a reform necessary, which was effected through the institution of vicarages. When monks were ordained, they were prepared to serve the churches on the property of the monastery, but, in process of time, the bishops insisted on having a resident clergyman, and when on this point a concession was made, the resident clergyman was endowed, by the monastery or the cathedral, by the grant of what are called the small tithes.

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These remarks are necessary to illustrate several enactments and conciliar arrangements which we shall have hereafter to record. But in referring to these circumstances we have anticipated the order of time. Very awful troubles were to be encountered, and many a battle was to be lost and won, before the time arrived for ecclesiastical regulation.

The troubles of the archbishop commenced with his consecration. The condition of the times rendered it necessary to administer that sacred ordinance with as little of ceremony as the solemnity of the occasion would admit, and we are not acquainted with the name of his consecrator. When he entered his cathedral he was conducted to Augustine's chair by a chapter reduced in its numbers to five.* For the Danes were in occupation of the Isle of Sheppey, or had only just evacuated it, and all but the old and infirm had fled from Canterbury.

We are probably to attribute to a timely flight the circumstance which strikes us as extraordinary, that although Canterbury was twice sacked by the Danes, once in 839 and again in 851, we do not read of a repetition of those atrocities which were committed when the pagan barbarians invaded Northumbria.† We are tempted to inquire why the rich monastery of St. Augustine's was spared, why Christ Church, if it did not escape spoliation, was not involved in destruction,—finding, as we do, that in the north of England the monasteries were the first object of attack. I think we can supply the answer. We are informed by those who have made Numismatics their study, that Archbishop Ceolnoth is *distinguished for the quantity* of money which he coined.‡ There are no

* Chron. Sax. ad ann. 995.

† Chron. Sax. 839, 851.

‡ Ruding, iv. 279.

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less than twelve varieties of his coin in existence. They are without the name of the monarch. They bear on the obverse the archbishop's bust, and on the reverse the moneyer's name, sometimes alone, and sometimes with the name of the mint. The mode of coining was this. The sovereign or archbishop, or any great ealdorman to whom the right of mintage belonged, was accustomed to retain a certain number of moneyers in his establishment, by some of whom he was attended as he went from place to place. And, whenever there arose a demand for money, the moneyers converted into coin, any silver or gold which might be at hand, whether in bars or in ornaments. The inverse operation is still prevalent in India: if a silver article of furniture is required, a certain number of rupees are forwarded to the bazaar, and they are returned manufactured into the thing demanded. The archbishop's moneyers were actively employed; and, as he left his chapter in such poverty that he was obliged to hire secular priests, unconnected with the cathedral establishment, to perform the sacred offices, for the performance of which no canons were to be found*, we may infer that he melted into coin all the silver and gold upon which he could lay his hands, and set the first example of that system of bribing the enemy to remain at peace, which was carried to a ruinous excess in the time of Ethelred the Unready. It is on record that in 864† the Danes were thus bought off, and, though the perfidious pagans ravaged the country round in defiance of the treaty, they abstained from attacking Canterbury.

One of the most spirited transactions of the war against the Danes, for such it had now become, was the organisa-

* Gervas. 1643. Chr. S. 870. † Asser, Vit. Ælf.

CHAP. V. Ceolnoth. 838.

tion of a fleet by Athelstan, the sub-king of Kent, brother to Ethelwulf. He was the first of the Anglo-Saxons who engaged the piratical horde on their own element: and with complete success; for he overcame their fleet at Sandwich, where eight Danish ships were captured, and the remainder repulsed with great loss of life on the part of the enemy.* The archiepiscopal and cathedral property was thus piously coined into the wooden walls of England.

When we look to the general affairs of the Church and country, we find the archbishop present at the Witenagemot assembled at Kingston in 838 by King Egbert, in which secular affairs of great importance were settled; and among them a "regular treaty of peace and alliance was agreed upon between the Kentish clergy and the two kings†," Egbert and his son Ethelwulf, whom Egbert had appointed king or sub-king (viceroy with the royal title) of Kent. This treaty shows the high and important position in the state which was occupied by the metropolitan, who treated with the two kings with almost the authority of a sovereign. So important, under the existing circumstances of the country, was this good understanding between the archbishop and clergy on the one hand, and the kings on the other, that in 839, when Ethelwulf had succeeded to the crown, another gemot was held "æt Astran," where the treaty was renewed in the presence of all the southern bishops. When Athelstan, the king's brother, was invested with the royal authority in Kent, a gemot was held, in 844, at Canterbury itself. It was attended by the archbishop and the two kings, *cum principibus, ducibus, abbatibus, et cunctis grandis dignitatis optimatibus.*‡ How fully the archbishop acted up to the spirit of the treaty,

* Chron. Sax. A.D. 845, 851. Asser, Vit. Ælf. Florent. Wigorn.

† Kemble, ii. 250. Cod. Dipl. 240.

‡ Cod. Dipl. 256.

and in deference to the sovereign authority of the crown of Wessex, we have already seen. CHAP. V.

At the same time we are surprised to find that at a period of such political excitement, when great talents are provided with an arena for distinction, we scarcely meet with the name of Ceolnoth except upon his coins. We read of Alstan, bishop of Sherburne, the noble-minded patriot, who united in himself the virtues, in ordinary times incompatible, of prelate, statesman, warrior; to whom, wise in his council, and when his country was invaded foremost in the battle-field, we are to ascribe the ultimate successes of Ethelwulf's eventful reign. And we read of St. Swithin (whose name is still in our mouths when a July sky is darkened by clouds) as the referendarius, keeper of the conscience, or as he is sometimes called, the chancellor of Ethelwulf. When we remark the mental imbecility which the king, distinguished only for animal courage, invariably evinced, unless the Bishop of Winchester were at his side, we are disposed to acquiesce in the high character assigned to Swithin by his contemporaries, for uniting in himself the religious fervour, the sound discretion, and the sober judgment of a really pious mind. But we are not permitted to place our archbishop in the same category with these distinguished men. To account for this we may remark that he must have had in Canterbury, incessantly threatened by the Danes, full occupation for his mind, unless he had been endued with great physical strength; and we may infer from the documents we possess, that the archbishop laboured under a chronic complaint, probably rheumatic gout.* This accounts for the holding of the gemot, to which we have already referred, at Canterbury, a place

Ceolnoth. 844.

* In Ingulph we have a legend in which it is asserted, in order to attract devotees to England, that a miracle was performed upon the arch-

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which would have hardly been selected by the King of Wessex in 844, without some assignable reason, such as the inability of the archbishop to move from home.

But however willing we may be to find excuses for the conduct of the two archbishops who successively occupied the see of Canterbury for more than sixty years, the facts remain the same, that they were neither of them men qualified to meet the exigencies of the time, and that during this period no great divine appeared among us: on the contrary, the study of the Scriptures and all knowledge leading thereto had been constantly declining; worldly corruption, and an indifference to all higher objects prevailed; and the noble employment to which the Church had been instigated by Theodorus, the education and improvement of the people, had been relinquished. The youthful Alfred was at this very time complaining that he could not find a master to teach him Latin; and to that great man we are indebted for the character of the age.

While the archbishop had to deplore the moral decay from within, the destruction threatened from without had become more and more formidable. The country was filled with robber hordes. The pirates who devastated our coasts had become robbers located in the heart of the land; and the Danes were pouring in from Scandinavia and the Baltic, and occupying the large forest tracts which the

bishop in 851. He was healed of a disease which is described as a kind of paralysis, attended with alarming pains. We may discard the legend and the miracle, but, as in most cases, they were founded on a traditional fact. The disease of the archbishop may have been aggravated by the winter, which was in that year peculiarly severe; he may have exclaimed at the Council of Cyningesbyrig, where the alleged miracle took place, that he was suddenly released from his pains, which would, nevertheless, in all probability recur.

Saxons had not penetrated. Here they found hunting-grounds, similar to those to which they were accustomed in their native land, replete with all that they regarded as the necessaries of life. The wild boar and the stag were found in the woods; geese, swans, and snipes abounded near the rivers, eels in the marshes. And if they sometimes fell in with the badger and the beaver, and had to encounter the wild cat, the fox, the wolf, and even the bear, they pursued these for sport, as the other animals for food. From these their fastnesses they descended upon the cultivated fields, robbing the serf of his swine and the thane of his corn. Instigated equally by their love of gold and their hatred of Christianity, they formed their plans of attack upon the monasteries and towns, suffering little by defeat, and ruining thousands by victory.

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While the Danes were devastating England, the accounts which the old archbishop received from foreign parts were equally distressing. On the continent, as in England, the Danes, under the name of Normans, had passed from the coasts to the inland provinces; the Christians of Spain were suffering under a cruel persecution on the part of the Mahometans; the Saracenic power was advancing upon Christendom with fearful strides; Crete was invaded; Sicily depopulated; whole provinces in Greece subdued; the suburbs of Constantinople had been burned; the soldiers of Mahomet had approached the walls of Rome. Through the arrogance of Pope Nicholas I., and the weakness of a dissolute emperor in the East, the Oriental churches were separating, almost separated, from Western Christianity. The Greek Church had denounced the Church of Rome as heretical, and the anathema was retorted by the Pope, who, in his correspondence with the imperial court, had now for the first time discontinued the language of a subject, and

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assumed the character of a sovereign, a character to which he laid claim by the donation of one whom both Rome and Greece regarded as a barbarian. He addressed the Emperor as an equal.

The world was out of joint, when, in 870, in the words of Asser, Archbishop Ceolnoth "went the way of all flesh, and was buried in his own city."

CHAP. VI.

FROM ETHELRED TO WULFHELM.

Ethelred.—Journey to Rome.—A married Pope.—Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals.—The Danes.—Their Atrocities.—Alfred in his youth.—Ethandune.—Wedmore.—Baptism of Guthrum.—District assigned to the Danes.—Archbishop seconds Alfred in his measures of Reform.—Consecration of Bishop of Llandaff.—Conduct of the Archbishop during the War.—Distinction between the reform under Alfred and that under Theodorus. *Plegmund.*—Plemstall in Cheshire.—Decay of learning.—A Hermit.—Boethius.—Saxon Chronicle.—Genealogy to Alfred.—Plegmund summoned to Alfred.—Court of an Anglo-Saxon King.—Inability to read and write no sign of Ignorance.—Johannes Scotus Erigena.—Grimbald.—Foundation of Oxford.—Plegmund consecrated.—Visits Rome.—Formosus Pope.—Pope excommunicated.—Plegmund obliged to visit Rome a second time.—Assists Alfred in translating Gregory's Pastoral.—Preface to Pastoral.—Absolute necessity of a learned Clergy.—Alfred's ecclesiastical Supremacy.—Seven Bishops consecrated.—Plegmund at Alfred's Grave.—Alfred's Character. *Athelm.*—Bishop of Wells. Highest excellence in time of War to be found in the Army; under Persecution among the Clergy.—State of Religion among the ordinary classes of Society. *Wulfhelm.*—Bishop of Wells.—Coronation of Athelstan.—Alfred's town, Kingston-upon-Thames.—Coronation Service of the Church of England same as that now used.—No Homage done or Oath of Fealty taken.—King's Oath.—Copy of the Gospels on which the ancient Kings swore still in existence.—Royal Marriages.—Present of Jewels and Relics.—Archbishop at Rome.—Hetærocracy of Rome.—The Pope victorious as a General.—Ecclesiastical Laws of Athelstan.—Tithes.—Ordeals.—Coinage.—State of England.

ETHELRED.*

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Ethelred. 870.

ETHELRED is said to have been a bishop in Wiltshire †; but I am not aware of the existence of any record of

* Authorities.—Saxon Chronicle; Birchington; Gervase; Asser, Vit. Ælf.

† Chron. Sax. 870.

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his consecration before his appointment to the see of Canterbury. He was, we may presume, educated at St. Augustine's, of which monastery he was afterwards a monk. His appointment to the archbishopric took place immediately after the death of Ceolnoth. He went to Rome for his pallium; for, as the pallium became more valued, the authorities of Rome required a personal application, unless a valid excuse could be urged,—thereby securing an expenditure of money, through the retinue of a metropolitan, to the great advantage of the trade of Rome, and creating a feeling of dependence on the part of the new metropolitan upon the Papal See. The papal treasury was replenished by the sums demanded in the way of fees.

When Ethelred arrived at Rome, he found the people sympathising in his domestic affliction with their sovereign pontiff. The Pope, Hadrian II., was a married man. He had married when a deacon, but had violated his marriage vows upon his taking priest's orders, by putting away his wife: and for this perjury in the sight of God his punishment was severe. His wife was still living when he was elected to the papal office, and his only daughter held a high, though not a clearly defined, position in society. The daughter of the Pope was seized, carried off, and married to Eleutherius, himself the son of a bishop, Arsenius, who had been sent by Pope Nicholas as his legate to France. The ex-legate had established an interest in the French court, and fled with his son and his daughter-in-law, for protection to the Emperor Lewis. The Pope demanded of the Emperor, that Eleutherius should be tried according to the Roman law for the abduction of his daughter. Eleutherius, who seems to have been a man of ungovernable temper, murdered his own wife and her mother the wife of the Pope, and was himself executed for his crimes by the

Emperor's commands.* A more horrible tragedy, illustrative of the time when the passions of men seemed to be beyond control, is scarcely conceivable; and if in civilised Italy such actions could take place, we must learn to make some allowance for the barbarities committed by the Danes in England, to which we shall have occasion presently more particularly to refer.

The archbishop, when passing from the home of the unhappy Pope to the ecclesiastical courts, became aware of the resistance which the French clergy, under the guidance of the celebrated Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, were offering to claims put forth by Hadrian, with all the arrogance, but without the discretion, of Nicholas I. These claims rested on the strength of the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals, which, notwithstanding their almost incredible anachronisms†, were destined, for centuries, to exercise a detrimental influence upon the whole Western Church, and, as a branch of it, upon the Church of England and her archbishops.

The Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals were, in point of fact, a new code of ecclesiastical laws, the authority of which, being almost unquestioned from the ninth century till the time of the Reformation, effected, and were now beginning to effect, a silent, gradual, but complete revolution in ecclesiastical affairs. We may, indeed, date popery, in the strict sense of the word, from their

* Milman, ii. 381.

† For example that Victor, bishop of Rome, wrote concerning the contested celebration of the Passover to Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, who lived two centuries later. The anachronisms, and the other clumsy frauds, especially the alteration and mutilation of passages professedly taken from Holy Scripture, were first pointed out by the Magdeburg centuriators, and have since been openly abandoned by Bellarmine, De Pontif. Roman. lib. ii. c. 14; by Baronius, Eccl. ad ann. 865, cited by Fleury, Hist. Eccl. tom. xiii. Dis. Prel. p. 15.

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publication. In the sixth century, a collection of ecclesiastical laws was drawn up by Dionysius Exiguus, a Roman abbot. They professed to contain the decrees of Pope Siricius, at the close of the fourth century, down to the writer's own age; and between the years 633 and 636 a recension of these decretals, which had received additions from time to time, was published by Isidore of Seville, a venerable name. These, in accordance with the centralising tendency of the public mind in the affairs both of Church and State, which existed in the seventh and following centuries, were conducive to the establishment and extension of Papal power. But one material link was wanting in that chain which was destined to fetter the European mind. The decretals of Dionysius and of the real Isidore showed that the Popes had received appeals, and had published their judgments as authoritative documents. But still the power thus exercised rested on human authority. It was a concession made by councils, or a deference paid to the Roman See from churches which were called into existence by the piety of Roman missionaries.

One court of appeal and one central authority in all spiritual and contested matters was the desire of divided Europe at this time; and there had been little ground of complaint hitherto of the manner in which the Papal judgments had been delivered. Nicholas, the first who claimed the authority afterwards exercised by his successors, generally contrived to be, or, we should rather say, it was his policy as well as his wish to be, on the side of right and justice. But still, what rested on a human basis, and upon the concessions made by the exigencies of society, presented only a foundation of sand. What society required in one age might become a nuisance in another. What man gave, man could take away; a council, when circumstances changed, might cancel the ordinances which,

under another set of circumstances, a council had appointed. The one thing wanted by those who advocated the Papal rights was divine authority. And this it was that the impostor who assumed the name of Isidore supplied. Through fabricated documents and forged decretals, he carried back the series of Papal rescripts as far as the ninety-third year of the Christian æra,—that is, to the Apostolic times. The Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals contain, as the romanticist* pretends, a complete series of the rescripts of Roman bishops from the time of Clemens Romanus. In these documents it is repeatedly asserted, that the Church of Rome was directly constituted head over all other churches, by our blessed Lord Himself; and it is alleged that, for the sake of convenience, *jubente Domino*, the episcopal chair of St. Peter, the Princeps Apostolorum, was transferred from Antioch to Rome.

But the object was not the elevation merely of the Papal power,—it had reference to the whole sacerdotal order: there was a regular gradation of ecclesiastical power, which had its charm in the simplicity of the arrangement. The clergy were lords over God's heritage, and as such they were emancipated from secular responsibility; but this rendered it more necessary to invest the bishops with complete power of jurisdiction: but as these powers might be abused, there was an appeal from diocesans to metropolitans; over the metropolitans are placed primates and patriarchs; and over all presided the Bishop of Rome, as successor of St. Peter. Upon him, in particular, it was said that our Lord had conferred the power to bind and loose; from him, therefore, all other power in the Church was represented as derivative, and to him, in consequence, it must be subordinate.

* It is by this mild term that he is mentioned by Möhler, Schriften und Aufsätze, i. 309.

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As these decretals emanated from France, it is probable that the immediate object of the author was, not directly to enlarge the power of the Pope, but rather to facilitate proceedings in courts of law, and through their alleged head to elevate the character of the clergy. There is no reason to suppose that the Popes were directly or indirectly concerned in the forgery. Copies of the decretals were in circulation; lawyers quoted them; their genuineness was not questioned; and the Popes merely took for granted what the world had already received as truth. At the same time, we cannot but suppose that by a man so acute and learned as Nicholas, the first Pope who referred to these decretals as an authority, their genuineness must have been suspected; and we may, after every charitable allowance, conclude that he and his counsellors were the willing dupes of a profitable imposture.

If Ethelred saw this work in Rome for the first time, he, at that very time, found their authority questioned by no less an authority than Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims. Hincmar had learning sufficient to perceive that many statements in these decretals did not correspond with the circumstances of the times in which they were alleged to have been written; and he had acuteness to perceive their drift, which was to reduce the whole Church to a servile dependence upon one man. He actually applied to them the expression of *figmenta compilata*, compiled fictions, and described them as a poisoned cup besmeared with honey.* But it was the misfortune of the age that princes and prelates were most of them governed by their momentary interests, and this very Hincmar, who in a controversy with the Pope could impugn the decretals, referred to them as authoritative in controversies between himself and his suffragans. Much reserve was

* Neander, vi. 127.

at first observed by the papal advocates in their reference to documents the authenticity of which must have been suspected; but they gradually made their way among the churches of Europe, until they became blended with the canon law; and the mighty sin did its work, whispering

> "Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desire
> Blown up with high conceits engendering pride,"

until at the Reformation, by very little historical research, it was discovered and discarded.

It was to a melancholy home that Archbishop Ethelred returned, when he took up his abode in the plundered palace of Canterbury. The predatory incursions of the Danes had now become a foreign invasion. The whole island was surrounded by their squadrons, and it was supposed that not less than two hundred thousand Danes were in the land. Canterbury, twice sacked, was almost deserted. Those who could earn a livelihood elsewhere were unwilling to remain in a position so liable to be attacked. The canons of the cathedral had taken their departure; and Archbishop Ceolnoth had been obliged to employ, in the services of his deserted church, the poor despised secular clergy, who were detained in the city to protect or provide for their wives and families. Ethelred desired to expel them, and to supply their place with monks, but monks to undertake the duty he could not find. The more devout had fled to the woods and wilds, there to live as hermits; the more active-minded and patriotic had exchanged the convent for the camp, or, as in the case of St. Augustine's, converted their monastery into a fortress, determined from behind the stone walls to defend their relics from profanation, and the aged and infirm of their brethren from violence.

The timid were alarmed, and the more courageous

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were nerved for the worst that could befal them, by the reports which reached their ears from the north of England, of the character and conduct of the Danes. They were described as men so fierce, that they were under a kind of monastic vow, never to sleep under a smoke-dried roof, or to partake, over a hearth-stone, of the inebriating cup which often filled their cabins with riot. Raw flesh was said to be their pleasant food, and the hot blood of slaughtered animals their most refreshing draught. It was reported that they would tear the infant from the mother's breast, and toss it on their lances from one to another, in their horrible and facetious cruelty. Tears they despised, and for their deceased friends they refused to mourn. It may be perceived that the Danes, like other barbarians, encouraged these reports of their ferocity and cruelty, in order to intimidate their enemies. There was among them a class of men called Berserkir, who tried to resemble wolves or mad dogs. They bit their shields. They howled. They lashed themselves into the most horrible fury for the perpetration of crime. The furor Bersuticus was in after ages referred to with horror and with awe. They proceeded with the sword in one hand and the torch in the other, impaling captives, and consigning plundered monasteries to the flames.

The Danes were urged to attack the monasteries by the lust of gain, and by a fanaticism which led them to regard Saxon Christians as apostates from Woden. The monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow, rendered classic ground by their connection with the venerable name of Bede, were reduced to ashes. Tynemouth and Lindisfarne had fallen before the barbarians: every monastic institute in Northumbria had been swept away within the short space of seven years.

That the account of Danish atrocities was exaggerated,

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or only in part correct, we shall have occasion presently to remark. But the reality was sufficiently painful. The prospect was as dismal, as the occurrences in the foreground, when Archbishop Ethelred returned to his country. Alfred was, indeed, on the throne, but Alfred was untried; and an aged ecclesiastic was not likely to rely with confidence on a young man who, though known to possess extraordinary talents, was, at the commencement of his reign, so impatient of folly and so unconciliatory in his manners, as already to have alienated friends, and to have rendered his followers lukewarm in his service. The funeral of the late king, his brother, took place at Wimborne Minster, instead of 871. Sherborne, because Sherborne, the burial-place of the West Saxon kings, was in the hands of the enemy; and young Alfred had hastened from the grave of his brother, not to the ceremonies of a coronation, but to the field of battle. In fearful succession came to the archbishop the account of eight battles fought in his own vicinity, in the country south of the Thames,—ending in a treaty of peace on terms humiliating to the West Saxons: in 872 the 872. news came that the Mercians had succumbed, and that the Danes were in possession of London: the year 873 brought 873. an account of the Danes having taken up their quarters in Torksey in Lincolnshire: in 874 the Mercians again 874. demanded the sympathy of the archbishop, for they were groaning under the oppression of the worthless Ceolwulf, whom the Danes had made king, in order that he might be the instrument of oppression in their hands: in 875, 875. he receives intelligence that while Northumbria is wasted by Halfdene, Cambridge (Grantabridge) is besieged by Guthrum. A slight change came over the scene in 876, 876. and 877, when some little success occasionally attended 877. the arms of Alfred: but this was only the lull of the waves just preceding a storm, and a fearful storm broke over the country, when in 878, it was announced that Wessex 878.

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was invaded; that the royal army had ceased to exist; that the Anglo-Saxons were emigrating to seek in foreign lands the protection they could not find in their own, and that the king himself had fled no one knew whither.

When the gloom was deepest it was dispelled by a sudden unexpected ray of light. It was rumoured that the king had erected a fort in Somersetshire. There the royal standard was unfurled; the golden dragon no longer quailed before the raven of the north. Courage began to return to the faint-hearted. The nobles rallied round their king, who stood before them as one risen from the dead. Troops came flocking in; armour had been gathered from all quarters. Alfred had displayed all the great powers of a general; and at Ethandune * he was the saviour of his country, having fought and won one of the decisive battles of the world. The victory was complete, and within fourteen days, the Danes, reduced to despair by hunger, cold and misery, were prostrate at the victor's feet, to hear the terms he was pleased to dictate.

The reader is at first surprised to find the fate of the whole country depend upon the issue of one battle; but the surprise will cease, if we bear in mind that victory in those days supplied the conqueror with the sinews of war, and at the same time rendered the defeated perfectly defenceless. In modern times an army, if defeated, can, by skilful generalship, be rallied, and may, in a short time, be prepared to renew the conflict. But at the period before us, the battle-field was an arsenal,—a magazine of military stores;—there, very slightly damaged, were strewn arrows, javelins, battle-axes and all the missiles of war, together with the defensive armour of the slain. It is thus that we may account for the rapid success of the Danish pirates. The Danes appeared on the coast with

* Chr. Sax. 878.

three or four ships; if they met with a powerful resistance, they retreated to their ships and put out to sea: but if on the contrary they gained a battle, they were immediately joined by outlaws from the forests and marshes, who, arming themselves with the weapons of the fallen, created an army for the Danes more fierce and terrible, in their thirst for plunder, than the invaders themselves.

The archbishop was now summoned to the Witenagemot at Wedmore *, and he found the great king, who had in battle and in the preparations of war, exhibited the prudence and sagacity of a consummate general, equally prudent and far-seeing, when assuming his place as a legislator and a statesman. In a thinly populated country, where marshes were to be drained, and forests levelled, and land reclaimed, there was ample room for the two races; and Alfred perceived that the greatness as well as the safety of the country depended on the fusion of the two races into one united people. This was his policy; and it became the traditional policy of his house. He perceived that the one thing which kept them apart was the difference of religion, and hence his first stipulation was, that the Danes should submit to the Sacrament of baptism. Their acceptance of baptism immediately blended their interests with those of the Anglo-Saxons, since the bitterness of the foreign Danes was in part occasioned, by their regarding the English as apostates from the worship of Woden. Although the policy of Alfred did not immediately produce all the fruits which he anticipated and desired, yet from his time the Anglo-Danes became a race distinct from the foreign Scandinavians. They made war sometimes with the Anglo-Saxon kings, but the war was like that which had been frequently made between the

* Thorpe on Lappenberg, ii. 54., supposes this to be Eddington, near Westbury. Whitaker (Life of St. Neot) supposes it to be Yatton, about five miles N.W. of Chippenham.

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kingdoms of the Heptarchy,—and they gradually, like the Normans at another period of our history, became absorbed into the English, making ultimately a fusion so entire that the distinction of races was lost, and one great empire formed.

There was nothing approaching to religious persecution, in the course pursued by Alfred. All who refused to be baptized were permitted to depart, and warned to quit the country; they went beyond sea under the command of the powerful Hasting*; but Guthrum and thirty of his nobles, representatives of his immediate followers, expressed their readiness to adopt the religion of their conqueror. That so large a portion of the Danish invaders were prepared to embrace the Christian religion, must in some measure be attributed to the firmness exhibited by the martyrs, who fell beneath their swords, praying for their murderers, and to that forbearance which was shown towards them on the present occasion by one who, if he had not been a Christian, instead of offering them a treaty, would have ordered them to execution.

Evil as had been the example set by courts and by the aristocracy, low as learning had become among the clergy, there were still true Christian hearts among the Anglo-Saxon people, and these, though concealed by their humility, as is mostly the case in the time of trial, yet by their meek and patient suffering evinced the power of that grace, which in the time of their need was vouchsafed to them.

The archbishop and his suffragans would certainly regard baptism chiefly as the means of conferring supernatural blessings upon those who approached the sacrament; but we should do them injustice if we were to

* William of Malmesbury, ii. 121.

suppose that they administered the ordinance without reference to the qualifications of the recipients.

Seven weeks elapsed between the victory of Ethandune and the baptism of Guthrum and his nobles: seven weeks not idly passed, but well employed in inculcating the fundamental truths of Christianity, and in preaching to the iron-hearted warriors the gospel of peace.

Alfred's camp was pitched at Aller, a place not far from Athelney. Thither came Guthrum and his warriors, professing their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Alfred was sponsor to the Danish king, and gave him, as his Christian name, the name of Athelstan. Twelve days, to cement their friendship, the warriors dwelt in the Saxon camp; on the eighth the chrisom-loosing took place, and the archbishop had the satisfaction of blessing a united flock.* The Church was still, as it had been all along, the point of centralisation,—the means, under Providence, of reducing eventually the several discordant dynasties, Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Danish, under one English monarchy.

Alfred, reserving to himself the suzerainty, if we may, in spite of the anachronism, employ the term, agreed that the boundary of the two kingdoms—that of the Anglo-Saxons and that of the Anglo-Danes—should commence at the mouth of the Thames, run along the river Lea to its source, and at Bedford turn to the right along the Ouse as far as Watling Street. And then the two Princes, with their respective counsellors, united in drawing up a code of laws, in which the object was to render peaceable and secure the commerce and intercourse of the two nations.

The illustrious king began now to establish his claim to his historical title, Alfred the Great; and to the assertion of a great historian, that in him were manifested

* Chron. Sax. 878.

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the virtues of an Antoninus, the learning and valour of a Cæsar, and the legislative spirit of a Lycurgus,—we make an addition,—the grace of an apostle! *

The archbishop had henceforth little to do, except to carry into effect the great designs of the king, and Alfred found in Ethelred a willing coadjutor. We are indeed surprised to find that, even during the war, both king and archbishop had found time and opportunity to legislate. The Danes appeared in the south of England not, as in the north, a lawless horde of plunderers, but as an army, becoming plunderers only when a victory was gained; and between the campaigns there were means of communication between one part of the country and another.

During Ethelred's pontificate it is said that Cameliac came to Canterbury to be consecrated by the archbishop to the see of Llandaff,—an event worthy of record, as it shows that the spiritual supremacy of the Church of England already extended at least over the south-eastern part of Wales. Several other events took place, the date of which is uncertain, but some of them must have occurred before the final settlement with Guthrum.

In 877 the archbishop received from King Alfred his ecclesiastical laws. It does not appear that any Witenagemot or ecclesiastical council was held at this time, and the laws were laid down by royal authority only. They are remarkable for the object which the pious king had in view, the infusion, namely, of a Christian spirit into the ancient laws of the land, derived, as they had been, from paganism; and for the evident care which he took to distinguish between revolution and reform. All

* Gibbon, Outlines of the History of the World. Miscellaneous Works, p. 600: ed. 1837.

his reforms were based upon the traditional habits of the people, and upon what we should now call the common law. There are particulars in detail to which we must allude: the first is the omission, in his repetition of the Ten Commandments, of the second, which leads us to suppose that image-worship was beginning to creep into the Church of England; and the next is, that from one of the enactments we find that the custom in the Greek Church of consecrating the eucharist behind a curtain or veil, during Lent, probably introduced by Theodorus, had been observed by the Church of England; and at this period, when things Roman were regarded as the model by the world in general, it gave such offence that by the people (urged on by their betters, we may presume) the veils were frequently pulled down.*

The great distinction between the reformation of Alfred, and that of Theodorus, was this, that, while both perceived that, without a good education, true religion could not prevail extensively, Theodorus converted the monasteries into schools, and Alfred erected schools, independent of the monasteries; and to his wisdom we are undoubtedly to trace what afterwards under William of Wykeham and King Henry VI. became the great blessing of his country,—our system of public school education.

In the episcopate of Ethelred and under the auspices of Alfred, the Church of England gave proof of its revived energy, by opening a communication with the Christians of the far East, and with the churches then existing in India. What first induced the Church of England, under its patriotic and pious king, to entertain the idea of this mission we do not know; but it is interesting to be able to trace back the first intercourse between England and Hindostan, to the year 883 †, and to know that it consisted in

* Ancient Laws, p. 20; Wilk. Conc. i. 186.

† Chr. Sax. 883.

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an interchange of Christian feelings, having originated in pure Christian charity. In this same spirit an interchange of kind offices and Christian feeling took place between the King of England and the Patriarch of Jerusalem.*

These things occurred towards the close of Ethelred's life. That he was cordial in his co-operation with the king is certain; that in many of the steps taken for the reformation of the Church, he suggested the proper mode of proceeding, is probable. And if by the greater genius of the illustrious Alfred, Ethelred is overpowered, to him is due at least the merit of carrying into effect the will of the Sovereign. He died in 889.

889.

PLEGMUND.†

Plegmund. 890.

There is a parish in Cheshire, called Plemonstall or Plemstall, a name which connects the nineteenth century with the history of the ninth. It derives its name from Plegmund, celebrated as archbishop of Canterbury, but more eminent still as the personal friend of Alfred the Great, who regarded himself as in some sense the pupil of one whom he affectionately describes as "my archbishop."

Plegmund was a Mercian by birth, and he was born in troublous times. The Dane was dominant in the land; and of the state of learning, and of the condition of the Church, a lamentable account is given by King Alfred, which the reader will find in a passage from his writings

* Asser, ad ann. 893.

† Authorities:—Malmesbury, Gesta Reg., Gesta Pontif.; Ingulf.; Gervase; Asser; Pauli's Life of Alfred, translated by Thorpe.

Aliases:—Plemundus, Lichf. Petrob.; Plegemundus, Gervase; Pleimundus, Malmesb.; Pleigmundus, Sim. Dunelm, F. Wigorn; Pleumundus, Huntingdon.

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presently to be quoted at length. We are, however, to remember that Alfred was a reformer, and his tendency, in consequence, was to exaggerate in his own mind the evils which required reformation. That ignorance prevailed, especially in Wessex and the country south of the Thames, there can be no doubt; the clergy, as well as the laity, were forced from their books when the Danes destroyed the monasteries, and when monks, having learned the art of war in the unsuccessful defence of their convents, enlisted in the national militia, and, during the temporary triumph of the Danes, were driven to the forest and the fen, (as was the case with the king himself,) there to support life by making reprisals on the enemy, and sustaining a course of predatory warfare. Alfred complained that the monks had vanished from the land, but there were still a few who determined, in spite of all difficulties, to pursue their studies, and to pray in solitude for the coming of better times; and of these, Plegmund was one.* They were compelled to a solitary life, and their humble abodes were spoken of as hermitages.

We distinguish between a hermit and an anchorite. Of the latter we shall have occasion to speak in the life of Dunstan: it is sufficient here to say that an anchorite was a recluse, who took up his abode in a penitential cell, either erected in a churchyard, or attached to some part of a church; and this cell, called a reclusorium, he never quitted. A hermit, on the contrary, was a more independent character: he moved at his convenience, from place to place, although, as was the case with Plegmund, when he found himself in good quarters, there he remained. Instead of avoiding society, a hermit would frequently take up his abode near to the gates or posterns of a town, seeking to benefit the wayfarers by his discourse, and receiving benefactions from the citizens for

* Gervase, 1644.

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his support. Owing to the veneration attached to a hermit's character, while he was safe from personal violence from his poverty, he could become both a student and a preacher of the Gospel. Through his preaching Plegmund laid the foundation of the present parish of Plemstall. In the very unsettled state of the district, however, Plegmund did not feel sufficiently secure to erect his hermitage in the immediate vicinity of Chester, but took up his abode four miles and a half from the city, on what was then an island *, surrounded by swamps, marshes, and stagnant waters, and approachable only by boats.† Here the few, who cared for their souls, might with little difficulty approach him, while the Dane and the ruffian would not think it worth their while to disturb him.

What books he carried with him we are unable to state. But Plegmund was distinguished as a theologian, and in the Anglo-Saxon period of our history, by a theologian was meant one who was mighty in the Scriptures. The Bible must have been his constant companion; and to this we may add with confidence, Boethius, "De Consolatione Philosophiæ."

The fate of Boethius, as an author, is remarkable; his "De Consolatione" was the handbook in the middle age, of all who united learning with piety, and both the author and his work have elicited one of the most eloquent and characteristic panegyrics of Gibbon: it was translated into

* "Successit Plegmundus, qui in Cestriæ insula quæ dicitur ab incolis Plegmundesham per annos multos eremiticam duxerat vitam." — *Gervase*, 1644.

† In several of the charters in Ingulph, we find fens and marshes regarded as valuable property; among other reasons as affording places of refuge in troublous times. This noble contempt of malaria may serve to illustrate a clever article which lately appeared in the Saturday Review, in which it was shown that modern alarm on the subject is excessive.

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Anglo-Saxon, by King Alfred, assisted by Asser, bishop of Sherborn, and it was "done into English" by Queen Elizabeth, who in so doing, followed the steps of Chaucer. On referring to Boethius, we are at first surprised at the popularity of the work during the period of our history when its circulation was the greatest. Although the illustrious author, who nobly dared to uphold the orthodox doctrine, in defiance of Arianism rendered terrible by the patronage of Theodoric, was penetrated with the Christian spirit, yet his work is chiefly a reproduction of the lessons of wisdom he had learned in the schools of the Peripatetics and the Stoics, and his topics of consolation are deduced from the tenets of Plato, Zeno, and Aristotle. We can conceive nothing more opposite to the whole tone and spirit of the popular legends. And to this we may attribute its popularity among the better educated classes of mankind. The formula, under which great truths are enunciated by great minds, soon becomes mere cant, when repeated *usque ad nauseam* by those who have only realised the truths in part, and who sometimes suppose that shallowness of thought may be concealed under peculiarity of diction. The fanatical mind continues to dwell upon and to repeat certain truisms, until the educated and the thoughtful begin to doubt whether the truth, assumed in the statements, have any real existence,—whether in fact the truisms be anything more than unexamined fallacies. The more humble and devout of that class of mind, to which allusion has now been made, rejoice when an opportunity is afforded of breathing a freer atmosphere, and the better informed and the better constituted minds of the middle age found, in the Consolations of Boethius, more solid food for thought than in the Acta Sanctorum.* Alfred's trans-

*. Although not collected, these already existed in legendary literature.

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lation of Boethius originated in his desire to create among his people a more healthy religious tone than that which was inducing not a few among the humbler classes to commingle the truths of Christianity with their ancient pagan superstitions.

It is generally supposed that Plegmund was in some way or other concerned, if not in the composition, yet in the transcription of the Saxon Chronicle, — the historical document which, next to Bede, is our chief authority in Anglo-Saxon history; and we may conclude, therefore, that the works of that remarkable author found their place on the scanty bookshelves of the hermitage in Cheshire. From the year 849 the Saxon Chronicle assumes a regular form; the narrative is more detailed than in the former part, and it has every mark of a contemporaneous history; and this continues to the year 891, the year in which Plegmund left England and went for consecration to Rome. Before the year 849 the Saxon Chronicle exhibits all the appearances of a compilation; after the year 891 the character of the document again changes; its entries are, for a time, less frequent and its information less valuable. The oldest manuscript known of the Saxon Chronicle, is that which is preserved in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and is the basis of the edition published in the "Monumenta Historica Britannica." This is generally known as the Plegmund MS.* It may be further remarked, that from certain

* "From internal evidence of an indirect nature," says Dr. Ingram, "there is great reason to presume that Archbishop Plegmund transcribed or superintended this very copy of the Saxon annals to the year 891, the year in which he came to the see. Wanley observes it is written in one and the same hand to this year, and in hands equally ancient to the year 924, after which it is continued in different hands to the end.

"At the year 890 is added, in a neat but imitative hand, the following interpolation, which is betrayed by the faintness of the ink as well

philological peculiarities of spelling, it appears that while all the other copies of the Saxon Chronicle exhibit a West Saxon origin, this manuscript was written in the dialect of the kingdom of Mercia, of which Plegmund was a native.*

A portion of the Saxon Chronicle was evidently written, though by a contemporary of Alfred, yet before that illustrious prince had ascended the throne. An entry was made in 855, with reference to a matter which probably caused some uneasiness to the superstitious mind of Ethelwulf. Ethelwulf, who was a monk in his heart, was more likely than his philosophical son to experience scruples of conscience, when his claim to the respect of all the Saxon races was made to depend upon his alleged descent from the Pagan divinities. Genealogists, always complaisant, undertook to prove that the son of Woden was descended from Adam; the result of their labours is given in the following entry: "And Ethelwulf was the son of Egbert, Egbert of Elmund, Elmund of Eafa, Eafa of Eoppa, Eoppa of Ingild; Ingild was Ina's brother, king of the West Saxons, he who held the kingdom thirty-seven years, and afterwards went to St. Peter, and there resigned his life; and they were the sons of Kenred, Kenred of Ceolwald, Ceolwald of Cutha, Cutha of Cuthwin, Cuthwin of Ceawlin, Ceawlin of Cynric, Cynric of Cerdic, Cerdic of Elesa, Elesa of Esla, Esla of Gewis, Gewis of Wig, Wig of Freawin, Freawin of Frithogar, Frithogar of Brond, Brond of Beldeg, Beldeg of Woden, Woden of Frithowald, Frithowald of Frealaf, Frealaf of Frithuwulf, Frithuwulf of Finn, Finn of Godwulf, Godwulf of Geat, Geat of Tætwa, Tætwa of Beaw, Beaw of Sceldi, Sceldi

as by the Norman cast of the dialect and orthography: 'Her wæs Plegemund geceron of gode and of eallen his halechen.'"—*Preface to Sax. Chron.*: ed. by Dr. Giles, p. 31.

* Asser, Mon. Hist. Brit. p. 487.

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of Heremod, Heremod of Itermon, Itermon of Hathra, Hathra of Guala, Guala of Bedwig, Bedwig of Sceaf, that is, the son of Noah, he was born in Noah's ark; Lamech, Methusalem, Enoh, Jared, Malalahel, Cainion, Enos, Seth, Adam the first man, and our father, that is Christ. Amen." *

After the great battle of Ethandune, and when the country was once more settled, King Alfred desired to gather round him learned men who might assist him in his own studies, and at the same time enable him to carry out the great measures he had devised for the better education of his people. Among the first persons thus summoned we find Plegmund, a testimony to the high character for integrity and learning which he had already established. †

Although Alfred had constituted Winchester as the capital of his kingdom, yet his court was not in the town. The Anglo-Saxons, like the other German races, disliked towns and treated the citizens with contempt. The towns were occupied by artisans and traders: these were generally freedmen, who had just raised themselves from the state of serfdom or from a servile condition. It was not till the reign of the Emperor Henry IV., that the citizens on the continent were permitted to carry arms,—the mark of gentility. The king's court was his camp. Our best idea, perhaps, of the court of an Anglo-Saxon king is that which we may have derived from a visit to the camp at Aldershot. There was the same rude discomfort commingled with the pomp and circumstance of war, with symptoms, beneath the surface, of refinement and taste. Anything more comfortless than an officer's hut we can scarcely imagine, and from the guttering candles on the table, we can understand how important

* Chron. Sax. ad ann. 855. † Asser, p. 487.

to the accurate measurement of time, must have been the horn lanthorns of Alfred, if they were placed anywhere but in his own tapestried apartment. But the eye soon rests on a splendid uniform neatly arranged on the wooden settee, and standing hard by is a table with splendid specimens of *bijouterie* and expensive works of art. Ornamental art is often carried to a high point of excellence even among half civilised people. The demand is small, the labourers are few, the prices high, and the workman has leisure to realise his idea of beauty and to elaborate every detail. We are not, therefore, on the one hand, to be surprised when we look with admiration on the few works of art, such as Alfred's jewel, which have been handed down to posterity; nor, on the other hand, are we to suppose that because the royal diadem may have been splendid in its jewellery, or the silken robes of state of exquisite texture, the king's house was replete with the conveniences of life, or that the ordinary utensils of the household were either plentiful or of skilful workmanship.

The studious hermit from the borders of Wales, now admitted a member of the Royal Household, was filled with admiration, when noting the vigour of Alfred's mind. The king had directed his attention to theological and ethical subjects, but the character of his genius, rendered comprehensive by reflection and habits of observation, was thoroughly practical. He brought his intellectual power and general knowledge to bear upon the characters of men and the events of life.

It is a mistake to predicate ignorance, of every one in the middle ages who was unable to read. The art of reading was regarded, as we are now accustomed to regard the art of drawing, in the light of an elegant, rather than of a necessary accomplishment. When it was doubtful whether a man would ever be in possession of a book,—to learn to read would appear a superfluous labour to all except those

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who were to be employed in the clerical profession; and when the memory was good, there were clerks who were contented if they could say the psalms and church offices by heart. Before the establishment of the printing press, books were expensive and few, and learned men were obliged to congregate in monasteries or at the courts of princes, such as Charlemagne and Alfred, where, and where only, a multitude of books could be found. On the other hand, although men were not great readers, they were most patient hearers. In the Pagan times, the scalds and the gleemen had been always welcome, and they were the historians and genealogists, as well as the poets of the age; their place was afterwards supplied by the lector. The office of lector was no sinecure; at meal times he was in the pulpit reading in the silent hall; all day long the lector's voice might be heard in the church, by those who were desirous of marking and learning and inwardly digesting the Scriptures they were unable to read. The great men, appetent of knowledge, surrounded themselves with scribes. From early life Alfred had exercised his memory, and, if not so deeply learned as Plegmund and men who had devoted themselves entirely to the one pursuit of mastering the information which is to be obtained through books, he, as well as Charlemagne, was distinguished for his literary attainments not less than for his wisdom in council, his justice as a magistrate, his ardour in field sports, and his strategic skill.

Plegmund found himself in the midst of learned men attracted to the court of Alfred, from all parts of Europe, by the fame and generosity of the king. Alfred had learned, in the school of adversity, virtues which he did not naturally possess, and which, in the first pride of conscious superiority, he had despised, and he now charmed all who approached him by the suavity of his manners and the gentleness of his temper. Franks, Frieslanders, Scots,

Armoricans, Britons, and even Pagans, were either members of his household or his occasional visitors. In nothing would the influence of Alfred become more apparent to Plegmund, than in the fact that the ancient British Church had learned to regard him as a protector, and had permitted Asser to abide in his court in order that the ties of amity, which were beginning to bind together Welsh and Anglo-Saxon churchmen, might be drawn the closer. When we compare Asser's life of Alfred with the Saxon Chronicle, we are convinced that Plegmund found in Asser a congenial spirit; and, from the anecdotes which the biographer had to narrate of the great king, he derived a pleasure similar to that which is experienced by ourselves, in a perusal of the "Gesta Alfredi," though to us the work has the additional recommendation of being a repository of Anglo-Saxon antiquities.*

It is a subject of controversy, whether Plegmund met in Alfred's court the celebrated Johannes Scotus, called by some writers, from his country, Erigena.†

This eminent divine had written, with freedom and learning, upon the doctrine of predestination, but the work which made the greatest impression upon the public mind was his Treatise "de Eucharistia." Paschasius Radbert, a monk of Corbey, had broached the

* Mr. Wright, in his "Biographia Britannica Literaria," has raised the question, whether the work attributed to Asser was in reality written by that prelate, or by any one contemporary with Alfred. Mr. Petrie refers with approbation to the arguments of Dr. Lingard in favour of the work. Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church, ii. 381. The great authority of Kemble may also be pleaded in its favour. Saxons in England, ii. 42.

† The arguments against the probability of his having been in England are forcibly put by Dr. Lingard in his "Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church," but his objections seem to me to be removed by Mr. Soames in his "Latin Church during the Anglo-Saxon Times."

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doctrine of transubstantiation, or of the corporal presence of our Lord in the Eucharist. The doctrine of Paschasius was, that there takes place, on the consecration of the elements, a change of the substance of the bread into the true body, and of the wine into the true blood of our Lord, even that which was born of Mary and suffered upon the cross; and hence he argued that our Lord was sacrificed every time the Eucharist was administered. He was opposed by many learned men, as Ratramnus, sometimes called Bertram, Rabanus of Mentz, and among the foremost by Johannes Scotus Erigena. When we bear in mind that the Church of England, though veering towards error, was substantially orthodox in reference to this doctrine, during the Anglo-Saxon period, and when we couple this fact with the tradition, handed down to us by the chroniclers, of Erigena's attendance upon Alfred, we may be inclined to think that their statement is confirmed, and that to his influence the orthodoxy of the English divines on this subject may be, in some measure, traced.

In the year 890 the see of Canterbury was vacant, and the king offered the metropolitan chair to Grimbald. Grimbald had been a monk of St. Bertin in France. He was recommended to the patronage of Alfred as a strict disciplinarian, as a good musician, and as a man of learning deeply read in Holy Scripture. His name is connected with the legend which would attribute to Alfred the foundation of the University of Oxford. With every wish to claim for Oxford this honourable connection with the greatest of our English kings, when we find that our only authority for the tradition rests upon two interpolations, one in the text of Asser and the other in a legend of St. Neot, backed by the brave assertions of more modern writers, we shall perhaps be of opinion that the less that is said upon the subject the better, although

it is highly probable that one of the public schools instituted by Alfred may have been established in that locality, and that Grimbald presided over it.

To the merits of Grimbald no higher tribute could have been paid than the fact that the see of Canterbury, when vacant by the death of Ethelred, was placed at his option by Alfred the Great.*

When Grimbald declined the appointment it was offered to Plegmund. We may presume that the proposal to elevate a foreigner to the metropolitan chair of England was an unpopular act, for it was with universal approbation that the election of Plegmund took place; and from the manner in which the entry is made in the Saxon Chronicle, we may infer that there was considerable excitement on the occasion. "This year, 890, Plegmund was chosen of God and of all the people, Archbishop of Canterbury." The king nominated him; the chapter, having prayed, as is still the custom, for the divine guidance, elected him; the people confirmed the nomination and the election, with their cheers. Florence of Worcester speaking of his accession to the archbishopric, mentions him as a man of extensive literary acquirements.

Plegmund occupied the see for twenty-four years, and paid two visits to Rome, the second a necessary consequence of the first. He was consecrated by Formosus the Pope. This Formosus, when bishop of Porto, had been excommunicated by a synod at Rome, and by another at Troyes†; he was at the same time bound by an oath never to resume his episcopal functions, to enter Rome, or to presume to any but lay communion. Nevertheless when the faction at Rome was predominant, of which he was a

* The language of the Chronicle seems to confirm the tradition that the archbishopric was offered to Grimbald: otherwise the authorities given in Alban Butler, July 8, would be insufficient.

† Hard. vi. 193. See Dollinger, iii. 134. Milman, ii. 414.

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leader, he was elected to the popedom: and he died Pope. After his death, when Stephen VI., having succeeded to the pontificate, directed the dead body of Formosus to be disinterred, the corpse was arrayed in the sacerdotal vestments, and placed in the chair of state, and then a council assembled to sit in judgment upon the corruption before them. A deacon was appointed to act as the dead man's advocate. But when the corpse was addressed, "Wherefore wert thou, being Bishop of Porto, tempted by ambition to usurp the Catholic see of Rome?"—the advocate was silent, and the silence of the living and the dead was assumed to be a proof of the guilt of the accused. The dead Pope was solemnly condemned. The corpse was again denuded of the sacred vestments, three of the fingers, those used in giving the benediction, were cut off, and the body having been dragged through the city was cast into the Tiber. It was also decreed by this council, that all who had been ordained by Formosus should be re-ordained by Stephen. Hence Plegmund had to pay the penalty of his ambition or of his weakness, in seeking to be ordained by the Pope, by a second visit to Rome, and by submitting to a rite of more than questionable propriety.

Plegmund on his return to England, after his first visit to Rome, cordially seconded the great king in his endeavours to reform the Church of England, to encourage in the clergy an attention to the duties of their sacred function, too much neglected during the late troubles, and to establish a learned priesthood. The first measure they adopted was to publish a translation of the Regula Pastoralis of Gregory the Great. In this work Gregory endeavours to show in what sense and in what manner the spiritual shepherd attains his office; how he ought to live and conduct himself according to the various circumstances and conditions of his flock; and how he must

guard himself against overweening conceit, if his labours should be crowned with success. It was translated by Alfred, assisted by Plegmund, and was carefully transcribed. A copy of it was sent to every bishop in the kingdom, and there was attached to each copy what was called an Æstel of the value of fifty marks.* Three of these copies without the æstel, have been preserved to the present day, with inscriptions addressed to Plegmund, archbishop of Canterbury, Werefrith, bishop of Worcester, and Wulfsig, bishop of Sherborne. In the style of handwriting, they resemble each other in a remarkable manner. The Pastoral Care was accompanied with a preface by the king himself, which is considered as one of the purest specimens we possess of Anglo-Saxon prose. The following is a literal translation of it by Mr. Wright†: "This is the preface how St. Gregory made the book which people call Pastorale. Alfred the king greets affectionately and friendly Bishop Wulsige, his worthy, and I bid thee know, that it occurred to me very often in my mind, what kind of wise men there formerly were throughout the English nation, as well of the spiritual degree as of laymen, and how happy times there were then among the English people, and how the kings who then had the government of the people, obeyed God and His evangelists, and how they both in their peace and in their war, and in their government, held them at home, and also spread their nobleness abroad, and how they then flourished as well in war as in wisdom; and also the

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* What was the Æstel of fifty mancuses which accompanied each copy? Æstel is a word which has sorely tormented philologists. Dr. Lingard conjectures it was a book-case or book-stand.

† Anglo-Saxon scholars are in the habit of being very literal in their translations and I have not ventured to correct them. But what may have been very good Anglo-Saxon is very often extremely bad English.

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religious orders, how earnest they were both about doctrine and about learning, and about all the services that they owed to God; and how people abroad came hither to this land in search of wisdom and teaching, and how we now must obtain them from without, if we must have them. So clean it was ruined amongst the English people, that there were very few on this side the Humber who could understand their service in English, or declare forth an epistle out of Latin into English; and I think that there were not many beyond Humber. So few such there were, that I cannot think of a single one to the south of the Thames when I began to reign. To God Almighty be thanks, that we now have any teacher in stall. Therefore I bid thee that thou do as I believe thou wilt, that thou, who pourest out to them these worldly things as often as thou mayest, that thou bestow the wisdom which God gave thee wherever thou mayest bestow it. Think what kind of punishments shall come to us for this world, if we neither loved it ourselves nor left it to other men. We have loved only the name of being Christians, and very few the duties. When I thought of all this, then I thought also how I saw, before it was all spoiled and burned, how the churches throughout all the English nation were filled with treasures and books, and also with a great multitude of God's servants, and yet they knew very little fruit of the books, because they could understand nothing of them, because they were not written in their own language; as they say our elders, who held these places before them, loved wisdom, and through it obtained weal, and left it to us. Here people may yet see their path, but we cannot follow after them, because we have lost both weal and wisdom by reason of our unwillingness to stoop to their track. When I thought of all this, then I wondered greatly that none of the excellent wise men who were formerly in the English nation, and

had fully learned all the books, would translate any part of them into their own native language; but I then soon again answered myself and said, they did not think that ever men would become so careless, and learning so decay. They therefore willingly let it alone, and would that more wisdom were in this land, the more languages we knew. Then I considered how the law was first found in the Hebrew tongue; and again the Greeks learned it, then they translated it all into their own speech, and also all other books; and also the Latin people afterwards, as soon as they had learned it they translated it all through wise interpreters into their own tongue; and also all other Christian people translated some part of them into their own languages. Therefore it appears to me better, if you think so, that we also, having some books which seem most needful for all men to understand, should translate them into that language that we can all understand, and cause, as we very easily may with God's help, if we have the leisure, that all the youth that is now in the English nation of free men, such as have wealth to maintain themselves, may be put to learning, while they can employ themselves on nothing else, till at first they can read well English writing. Afterwards let people teach further in the Latin tongue those whom they will teach further and ordain to higher degree. When I thought how the learning of the Latin language before this was decayed through the English people, though many could read English writing, then I began among other divers and manifold affairs of this kingdom to translate into English the book which is named in Latin Pastoralis, and in English Herdsman's book, sometimes word for word, sometimes meaning for meaning, as I learned it of Plegmund, my archbishop, and of Asser, my bishop, and of Grimbald, my presbyter, and of John, my presbyter. After I had then learnt it so that I understood it as well as my understanding could allow

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me, I translated it into English; and I will send one copy to each bishop's see in my kingdom, and on each one there is an Æstel of the value of fifty mancuses; and I bid in God's name that no one take the æstel from these books, nor the books from the mynster, unknown, as long as there are any learned bishops, as (thanks to God) there are now everywhere. Therefore I would that they remain always in their places, unless the bishop will have them with him, or it be lent somewhere until somebody write another copy."*

When the "Pastoral Care" was first published, Gregory was asked by a bishop "what should be done, if men like those described in that work could not be found to fill the offices of the Church? Whether it was not enough to know Jesus Christ and Him crucified?" As this is a question proposed by a certain class of mind in every age, we may be sure that it was suggested to Plegmund. It is observed by Neander, that he who proposed such a question as this, could scarcely have considered how much is required rightly to know and understand these words in the sense of St. Paul!† What may have been Plegmund's answer we know not, but by the king a practical reply was made, in his avowed intention of preferring none but men of learning.

It is pleasant to see in Alfred the same intuitive perception of the right course, which existed in Martin Luther, who, in a letter to Eoban Hess, beautifully remarks: "I see that there was never any remarkable revelation made of the word of God, unless He prepared the way by the revival and flourishing of languages and literature, as so many precursors like the Baptist.‡

With all his veneration for the see of Rome, and with

* Wright, Biograph. Britann. Literaria, i. 397.

† Neander, v. 185.

‡ Quoted by Neander, Mem. of Christian Life, p. 417.

all his determination to retain the friendly relations with its bishop which his father had established, Alfred was one of those princes, who determined to show himself in all causes, and over all persons, ecclesiastical as well as civil, within his dominions, supreme. He issued the Pastoral in his own name, referring to Plegmund as "my archbishop," and he undertook, in right of his regal power, to admonish his bishops. By his rigour indeed in not preferring any but men of learning, he left so many sees vacant at the time of his death, that complaints were made, that the ordinary business of several of the dioceses was suspended. This state of things, Archbishop Plegmund, after Alfred's death, was called upon to remedy. There are some inconsistencies in the statements made with reference to the archbishop's mode of acting in this matter, and there were evidently difficulties with which he had to contend. All that we can state with anything like certainty is, that Plegmund consecrated seven bishops on one occasion, and created some new sees. On this point there seems to have been a uniform tradition.*

Once again we find the archbishop and Grimbald in connection, and engaged in a common work. Alfred had laid the foundation of a new minster in the city of Winchester, at the north side of the cathedral, which he designed to be the royal cemetery. He died before the building was completed, and was buried in the old cathedral. His son, Edward the Elder, with pious care, finished the mausoleum, and at the same time converted it into what, in the loose language of the day, was called a monastery, although it was served not by monks but by

* See Stubbs, p. 13. It has been asserted by some historians that Plegmund acted under threat of an interdict, and that he was compelled to proceed by a bull from Rome. But Collier shows the insuperable chronological difficulties by which the assertion is surrounded.

CHAP. VI. Plegmund. 903.

secular clergy. It became a school for the education of the higher classes, and over it Grimbald presided.* It was at the consecration of this building that the two friends met for the last time.†

Two aged men they were, the literary advisers of one who is now known as Alfred the Great, but at that time was more affectionately described as "England's darling." Fable has dabbled with the fame of Alfred, but not, as in the case of King Arthur and other heroes, to the annihilation of his historical existence. In Alfred's case, the myth can, without much difficulty, be separated from the fable, and when the chaff has been scattered to the winds, there is still a solid residuum of truth. His great merit was that of common sense directing an inflexible integrity of purpose. We admit that the British constitution was not created by Alfred; it is a goodly tree, the roots of which are lost in the depths of a far remoter antiquity, and can be traced into pre-historic times. He did not divide the country, as it has been fabulously asserted, into shires, hundreds, and tythings; these formed part of the system which the Saxons brought with them from the continent; but he infused into the institutions which he found established a vigour and a life which they had not formerly possessed; and he first compacted into system the different laws of the Heptarchy, tolerating a diversity of customs, but endeavouring to bring all under one principle, and basing that principle on religion.

His sternness in punishing the injustice and ignorance of those who accepted offices of trust, the duties of which they were unwilling or unable to perform, and the success with which he prevented the few who were

* This building was afterwards removed to Hyde Meadow, and became Hyde Abbey.

† Chron. Sax. 903. Monasticon Anglicanum, ii. 427.

becoming an aristocracy, from converting their bocland or estates into independent principalities, have given rise to stories of his extreme severity; but it ought not to be forgotten by those who accuse him of stretching the royal prerogative beyond its proper limits, that he was emphatically the friend of the people, whose rights he was vindicating, when he repressed the rising power of a tyrannical oligarchy, when he deposed the ignorant among his judges, and when he punished the unjust.* He himself gives us his principle of action, when, in concluding the introductory chapter of his laws, he declares that "he had collected together and put into writing many of those things which his ancestors had observed, and which he approved; and with the advice of his witan had neglected many of those which he did not approve;" adding that "he had not dared to attempt to commit to writing any of his own, for it was unknown to him what might be satisfactory to them who should succeed him; but that whatever he could find in the days of Ina, Offa, or Ethelbert, which appeared to him just he had adopted, and the rest he neglected."† In short he, as a great reformer, introduced that principle of reform, which, whether in what relates to religion or to civil affairs, has always formed the character of the English mind — the principle, which is exhibited in a determination to render our institutions as perfect as possible in their administration, without reference to theoretical anomalies, — the principle, which perplexes foreigners, while it excites their admiration, for to them our Reformers appear in the light of Conservatives, and our Conservatives appear to be Reformers, — the principle, which unites us in general action, although in the agents the ardour of reform and the circumspection of conservatism are mixed in different proportions.

* Lappenberg, ii. 66. Asser, 497.

† Ancient Laws, p. 26.

CHAP. VI.

Plegmund. 903.

It was to the virtues of Alfred in private life, that Plegmund and Grimbald would chiefly refer with that affection, reverence, and respect, which public excellence is sure to elicit, when seen in the unrestrained amiability of the domestic relations.* They would speak of his unwearied diligence, his sound economy, his love of justice; and they had witnessed his tenderness as a husband, his kindness as a father, and the ardour, sincerity, and steadiness of his attachments to all who deserved his respect and had won his friendship. His courage on the field of battle, his meek submission to neglect and insult in the marshes of Athelney were already historical facts; in private it was seen that his fortitude was equal to his valour, for it was unshaken by the frequent pressure of a complicated disease†, which, among the generality of mankind, would have clouded the brightness of every joy, and deepened the gloom of every sorrow, but was not permitted, in his case, to interfere with the pleasures of social intercourse. The agonies of pain he had sometimes to endure were excruciating, but they were borne with that humble patience which proves the sincerity of his religious convictions, and shows that although his piety was the result of frequent meditation, he was far removed from the reveries of fanaticism.

The venerable friends having watched, fasted, and prayed beside the porphyry coffin, in which were deposited the earthly remains of him, whose early removal

* Alfred left by will to his wife Elswitha, the estates of Wantage and of Ethandune — his birthplace, and the place where he established the liberties of his country; whether this arose from his knowledge that these places were from their associations dear to his wife's heart, or whether it was a legacy made at her own request, the fact reveals to us the existence of a deep and delicate domestic sentiment. Cod. Dipl. 314.

† It seems from the description of it that Alfred's disease was tic douloureux. Asser calls it "ficus."

appeared untimely, separated, each to assume his place in the solemn, and yet jubilant, ceremonial, which terminated in what was technically styled the translation of King Alfred.* CHAP. VI. Plegmund. 903.

Archbishop Plegmund was, no doubt, a wiser and a better man from his connection with the family of Alfred, separated as the great bulk of the clergy then were, through a grand mistake in morals and in theology, from the elevating comforts and softening influences of domestic intercourse. He carried out consistently the plans of Alfred, and laboured diligently to secure for the church a learned ministry. His life concluded as it commenced, in the midst of turmoil, for the Danes were again spreading alarm and confusion in various parts of the country. But he was removed from this troublous world by death, on the 23rd of July, 914†, and was buried in the cathedral of Canterbury. His portrait does not appear upon his coins. The obverse has his name. The reverses have only that of the moneyer.

ATHELM.

We know not what were the peculiar merits which recommended Athelm, the successor of Plegmund, to the notice of King Edward the Elder, and to the chapter of Canterbury. We first hear of him as a monk of Glastonbury, and then as Bishop of Wells.‡ Athelm. 914.

We have had occasion to refer before to the character

* Mon. Angl. ii. 427.

† Florence of Worcester places the succession of Athelm in this year; M. Westm. 915; Chr. S. 923.

‡ W. Malmesb. Gesta Pont. i.; Flor. Wig. ad ann. 914; Ralph de Diceto; Ang. Sacr. ii. 681.

CHAP. VI. Athelm. 914.

of Ina, king of Wessex, one of the many great and good men who adorned the house of Cerdic. He was distinguished not more as a warrior than as a statesman; and his laws being the foundation of those of Alfred have reached in their spirit, if not in their letter, to the present generation. Although his piety, at the close of life, assumed the fantastic character of the religion of the age, yet it was often practical, and its practical quality was particularly displayed in his noble foundations of Wells and Glastonbury. The latter, though now in ruins, and only the revival of a more ancient establishment on the part of Ina, was for a long period the chief seat of education for the upper classes of society in England, while Wells has remained what it became under Plegmund, the residence of a suffragan of Canterbury. By Ina, a collegiate church was established at Wells, a place to which from its salubrious springs, there was much resort. It was more fully endowed by some of his successors, and it had Athelm for its president, probably with the title of Dean, when Plegmund determined to increase the members of the episcopate, and forming Somerset into a diocese, established the see at Wells, and consecrated Athelm its first bishop.

Athelm was translated to Canterbury in 914, and occupied the metropolitan see for nine years. During this period, nothing memorable occurred in the history of the church. The heroic spirit of the age was evoked by the gallant King Edward the Elder, a worthy successor of his father. In times of invasion and defensive war, the highest excellence is to be found in the army, as in times of persecution, in the clerical order. When men undertake clerical functions, knowing that they stand the chance of being marked first for martyrdom by the persecutors of the Church, the noble, daring, disinterested spirits are eager to confess before men the great Captain of their

salvation. When persecution has ceased, and the country is attacked, they who are generously prepared to risk their lives for the good of others, are to be found sanctifying the camp by their consistent conduct, and proving patriotism to be a branch of Christian charity. Of this we have proof in military history, from Cornelius to Havelock. We are not, therefore, surprised when we find Alfred and his archbishops complaining of the difficulty they experienced in obtaining well qualified men to discharge the ministerial functions of the Church; for the highest class of Christian mind was nerving the limbs which enabled the hero to bid defiance to his enemies, and to establish the liberty of his country.

But we avail ourselves of this pause in our history, to remind the reader that in estimating the religious character of every age, he must, if he be a Christian, exercise that faith, of which charity is always a component part. The Christian believes that whatever may be the outward circumstances of the Church, the Spirit of the Holy God is ever comforting and elevating the unknown souls of thousands, who, through the troubled sea of controversy, not unmoved, not without much of care and watchfulness, steer right onward, their compass being an honest heart and upright intentions. A great part of the effects of the Gospel must always remain hidden from the eyes of the majority of men, and can find no place in history. They are not made known to us by the biographers of the present age, or the legends of ages past. When a man knows that he is an object of admiration to those around him, it must always be very difficult for him to preserve his Christian simplicity of character; and legends and biographies, very useful in their way, record for the most part, the modes of action, and the death-bed scenes, which are more or less connected with the fanaticism of the age, or the conventionalities of the existing religious

CHAP. VI. Athelm. 914.

world. The parochial minister of any large experience, must remember innumerable instances in every class of society, among the high and the low, the rich and the poor, of the truly Christian manner in which suffering has been endured and the temptations of prosperity resisted; in which self-denial has been exercised, and all the virtues, inculcated in the Sermon on the Mount, have been observed, by persons whom the world at large has regarded as very common-place Christians, and fanatics have contemned as scarcely Christians at all. It is in little unrelatable acts of pure disinterested piety, in persons not canonised in their life, or in their death, that the real power of the Gospel may be discovered by the eye which looks beneath the surface.

To the really Christian mind, the following will be a suggestive anecdote, and I lay it the more readily before the reader, because, as we have seen, the clergy were referred by Alfred and Plegmund, whose system was followed by Athelm, to the instruction and example of Gregory the Great; and also because it confirms the statement already made, with reference to the means of instruction to which piety resorted when books were few.

Gregory describes a certain person, who, except for this brief passage in his writings, would have been unknown to the world, who was the type of many others. "In the vault through which persons pass to the church of Clement, was a certain man named Servulus, whom many of you knew, as I knew him, poor in earthly goods, rich towards God, who had been worn out by long illness; for from childhood to the end of life he was lame in all his limbs. Do I say that he could not stand? He could not even sit upright in his bed, nor raise his hand to his mouth, nor turn himself from one side to the other. His mother and brother were always with him to wait upon him, and whatever he received in alms, he distri-

buted with his own hands to the poor. He could not read, but he had purchased a Bible; he received all pious men as guests, who read to him constantly out of the Scriptures. And thus, without being able to read, he became acquainted with the whole Bible. Amidst all his pains he endeavoured to thank God, and to spend day and night in praising Him. When he felt himself near death, he begged his visitors to stand up near him, and to sing psalms with him in expectation of his approaching dissolution. And as he was singing with them, he made a sudden pause, and exclaimed aloud: 'Hush! do you not hear how the praise of God sounds in heaven?' And as he applied the ear of his heart to this praise of God, which he perceived mentally, the holy soul departed from the body." *

The following delineation of the character of a pious "minister of the word," which was intended to describe, in some measure, Cæsarius of Arles, is added, because it shows what kind of assistance the laity expected from the clergy; and unless such assistance was to some extent afforded, the description instead of having been received as substantially correct, would have been regarded as a sarcasm and satire. Julianus says of such a one: "He converts many to God by a holy life and by holy preaching. He does nothing in an imperious manner, but always acts with humility. By the striving of holy love, he places himself on an equality with those who are subject to him. By his conduct and preaching, he seeks not his own glory, but the glory of Christ. All the honour which is shown him, if he lives and teaches in a priestly manner, he always refers back to God. He consoles the dejected, he feeds the poor, he announces to those who are in despair, the hope of the

* I give this from Neander's Memorials of Christian Life, p. 406.

CHAP. VI. Athelm. 923.

forgiveness of sins; he urges on those who are advancing in a right course; he spreads light among those who are wandering. Such a man is a minister of the word; he understands God's voice, and is for others an oracle of the Holy Spirit."*

Athelm appears to have had the happiness of reaping the fruits which resulted from the seed wisely sown by his immediate predecessors, under the direction of Alfred. He died on the 8th of January, 923.

WULFHELM.†

Wulfhelm. 923.

Wulfhelm was consecrated by Archbishop Athelm, to whom both at Wells and at Canterbury he was the successor.

One of the first public acts he was called upon to perform, within two years of his appointment, was to officiate at the coronation of Athelstan; to the splendour of whose coronation, as to an event upon which tradition loved to dwell, the chroniclers‡ frequently refer. Athelstan was certainly not the first king who wore a crown. When the regalia were, in the time of the Commonwealth, "totallie broken and defaced," an inventory was made out of the royal ornaments removed from Westminster to the Tower, and in that inventory, still in existence, the most remarkable thing is a crown, called King

* Neander, Memorials of Christian Life, p. 345.

† Authorities:—William of Malmesbury; Gervase.

‡ Florence of Worcester, who is followed by most if not all historians, ancient and modern, in mentioning the splendour of King Athelstan's coronation, represents Athelm as the archbishop who officiates: this, however, is clearly a mistake, Athelstan did not succeed to the throne till the year 924 and Athelm died in 923. There is a signature by Wulfhelm as archbishop in the year last mentioned.

Alfred's, and described, "as of gould wyerworke, sett with slight stones, and two little bells." That the authentic crown of this illustrious king should have been preserved through so many ages may seem almost incredible, yet a tradition of its existence may be found in a very early writer, Robert of Gloucester, who wrote in the time of Henry III.* We have also, in the "Pontifical" of Egbert, full proof of the coronation of the kings of Northumbria.

CHAP. VI. Wulfhelm. 924.

But there are reasons to be assigned why, in Athelstan's case, the ceremonial should be more than usually attractive. Some doubts seem to have existed with respect to the legitimacy of Athelstan's birth†, and this rendered the attestation which a coronation afforded of his election by the witan, and his acceptance by the people, a matter of some importance, especially as a pretender had already made his appearance. We may also observe that Athelstan, from the commencement of his reign, had evidently determined to assert his claim to be the king of all England. Although the Anglo-Saxon kings were elected, the election was confined to the descendants of Woden, who were now nearly reduced to the house of Cerdic; and this happened at a time, when the necessity of centralising their power was one of the signs which proved the Anglo-Saxons to be further advanced in the processes of civilisation than the Danes, whose power they united to resist.

Athelstan was elected by the witan at Winchester, and he determined that his coronation should take place in

* Taylor, Glory of Regality, p. 94.

† "Occasio contradictionis, ut ferunt, quod Athelstanus ex concubina natus esset. Sed ipse præter hanc notam (si tamen vera est) nihil ignobile habens, omnes antecessores devotione mentis, omnes eorum adoreas triumphorum suorum splendore obscuravit." — *Malmesbury, Gest. Regum*, ii. p. 131.

CHAP. VI.

Wulfhelm. 924.

the vicinity of London.* The order of proceeding was as follows: — A king was elected by a certain number of voters, the witan, and he was then presented to the people, or the non-voters, who signified by their shouts their acquiescence in the appointment, upon which followed the coronation by the bishops and clergy.

In the life of Plegmund we have alluded to the dislike felt by the Teutonic and German races to towns. Athelstan accordingly, instead of proceeding to London, pitched the royal camp at Moreford, so called because there was here a ford across the Thames, well known even in the Roman times. This became the place where the Saxon kings were generally crowned, and it has retained the name of Kingston-upon-Thames. It was of easy access to the multitudes who hastened to express their adhesion to the decision of the Wessex witan, and to fight under the banner of the son of Edward and the grandson of Alfred. The king stood before them, — a thin, spare man, thirty years of age, with his yellow hair beautifully interwoven with threads of gold. He was arrayed in a purple vestment, with a Saxon sword in a golden sheath hanging from a jewelled belt; — the gifts of Alfred, from whom, upon his coming of age, according to an old Teutonic custom, he had received his shield and spear. On an elevated platform in the market-place, and on a stone seat, he took his place, the better to be seen by the multitude.† He was received with shouts of loyalty and as

> "One eminent above the rest, for strength,
> For stratagem, or courage, or for all,
> Was chosen leader."

Then, elevated on a stage or target, he was carried on the shoulders of his men, being from time to time, in

* Malmesbury, G. R. ii. 131. † Stow, An. 924.

their enthusiasm, tossed into the air*, until they arrived at the doors of the church. Here the archbishop was standing to receive him, and the king, supported by two prelates, on either side one, proceeded to the steps of the altar, and prostrating himself remained for some time in private prayer. When the king had finished his private devotions, the archbishop proceeded to the coronation.

The reader will be interested to know that the coronation service of the Church and realm of England has been substantially the same from the eighth century to the present time, a period of eleven hundred years. It has been observed, by a competent authority, that no other Church or country can produce a series so complete.† In saying this, however, we must make one exception. After the introduction of the feudal system by William the Conqueror and his successors, all territorial dignities and possessions were held of the king as chief lord. But an Anglo-Saxon king was not lord of the soil, he was simply the elected chief of the people. Consequently, homage and the oath of fealty were not, as yet, introduced. The oath taken by Ethelred, and we may presume, therefore, the oath administered by Archbishop Wulfhelm to King Athelstan, was as follows: — "In the name of Christ I promise three things to the Christian people my subjects. First, that the Church of Christ and all the Chris-

* "Impositusque scuto, more gentis, et sustinentium humeris vibratus, dux deligitur."—*Tacit. Hist.* lib. iv. ch. 15. Mr. Taylor, in the "Glory of Regality," refers to a vestige of this practice in the elevation and chairing of our representatives in Parliament. He says, writing in 1820, that at the elections for the county of Norfolk, for Norwich, Yarmouth, &c., the candidate, standing erect upon a platform, is carried on men's shoulders three times round the place of election, and is frequently tossed by them into the air.

† Maskell, Monumenta Ritualia; where the reader will find the office given from Egbert's "Pontifical," together with the form used by Dunstan at the coronation of Ethelred. Maskell, iii. 4—132.

CHAP. VI. Wulfhelm. 924.

tian people shall always preserve their peace under our auspices; secondly, that I will forbid rapacity and iniquities of every condition; thirdly, that I will command equity and mercy in all judgments, that to me and to you the gracious Lord may extend His mercy." *

In relation to the coronation oath, we may mention a Latin MS. of the Gospels † still in existence which is said to have belonged to King Athelstan, and upon which, according to tradition, the ancient kings of England took their respective coronation oaths. That it is of the antiquity assigned to it no one acquainted with manuscripts can for a moment doubt; to the fact that it was used at the coronation of Charles I. we have the positive testimony of a contemporary, the well-known antiquary Sir Simonds D'Ewes. There is good proof that in the latter part of the fifteenth century it was in the possession of Mary of York, Duchess of Burgundy, sister of Edward IV., and that it was believed by her to have been used at the coronations of former kings; and there is strong *prima-facie* evidence that it was given by Athelstan to the church of Dover. The book became the property of Sir Robert Cotton, and it still forms part of the Cottonian Library in the British Museum. It is a fine specimen of the writing as well as the art of illuminating in the ninth century, but it is of the continental rather than of the Anglo-Saxon school, and this is only what we should expect when we find the following inscription: —

✠ Odda, Rex.
✠ Mihthild, Mater Regis.

Now we know that Athelstan made political capital out of his sisters, the daughters of King Edward being

* Lappenberg, ii. 150.

† MS. Cotton, Tiberius A. 2.

distinguished for their amiability as well as their beauty. The Emperor, Henry the Fowler, sought the hand of one of these royal ladies for his son Otho, to whom the fair Edith was married in the year 930. Odda is the Saxon form of writing Otho, and the Empress Matilda was Otho's mother.*

As the young princess was married in Germany, Archbishop Wulfhelm did not officiate at the marriage; but very soon after the coronation, in January 925, his services were required at Tamworth, where the court then resided, to officiate at a political marriage less happy in its results than that of Edith.† In his desire to obtain peaceable possession of Northumbria, the king effected a marriage between one of his sisters and Sihtric, a Northumbrian prince, who first submitted to baptism, administered, it may be presumed, by no less a person than the archbishop himself. Again, at a later period, we see the good offices of the archbishop required, when the most beautiful of the daughters of Edward was married to Hugh, Count of Paris, the son of Robert I. and the father of Hugh Capet.‡ The marriage was negotiated by Adulf, Count of Boulogne, and is remembered by the splendour of the wedding presents, which were exhibited to the nobility at Abingdon, whither the royal court had moved.

Among the presents there were some which were peculiarly attractive to the archbishop, although we may ourselves smile to think how easily and often the English people have been outwitted and deceived by foreign diplomatists. The olfactory nerves were regaled by perfumes such as no English nostril had before inhaled; the

* Turner, ii. 203. The statement is made on the authority of Mr. Holmes, in a letter published in the Gentleman's Magazine for May 1838.

† Chron. Sax. 925.

‡ Malmesb. G. R. ii. 135.

CHAP. VI. Wulfhelm. 926.

eyes of the ladies rested with pleasure upon the splendid jewels, especially on the emeralds, the greenness of which, according to William of Malmesbury, when reflected by the sun, illumined the countenances of the by-standers with agreeable light. On the same authority we may mention a diadem, precious from its quantity of gold, but more so for its jewels, the splendour of which threw sparks of light so strongly on the beholders that the more steadfastly any person endeavoured to gaze, so much the more he was dazzled and compelled to avert his eyes. In every age there are men of taste who can appreciate the wonders of human art, even as in nature they enjoy the beautiful and sublime; and to the admiration of this class of mind in the court of Athelstan was exhibited a certain onyx vase,—evidently an antique, and reminding us of the Barberini or Portland vase,—so exquisitely chased, that the corn-fields sculptured on it seemed to wave, and the vines to bud, and the men to move; so highly polished that it resembled a mirror. All tastes were consulted; the younger men and the warrior chiefs were summoned to the court, where pranced a present of horses, with all their trappings, and, as Virgil says, "champing their golden bits." The graver men, who regarded these things as follies, are looked upon in these days as guilty of folly yet greater than that which they themselves condemned, for their minds were absorbed in the contemplation of the relics. These were various. There was the sword of Constantine the Great, in the hilt of which was one of the nails of the cross, and on which was inscribed in golden letters the name of its former possessor. There was the spear of Charlemagne, said to be the identical weapon with which our Saviour's side was pierced, and which enabled the invincible emperor, whenever he hurled it against the Saracens, to come off victorious. There was the banner of St. Maurice, the chief of the Theban Legion,

and, lastly, there was a part of the holy cross, and of the crown of thorns set in crystal.*

The archbishop's experience in courts and camps must have been of some service to him when he visited Rome in 927. The contrast between the court he left and the court he visited is remarkable. He left a warlike king acting upon Christian principles, and contributing liberally to the foundation of religious establishments; he found a prelate at Rome seated on the papal chair, who was both a statesman, and a warrior, but a man of profligate habits, and of irreligious life. Rome was at that time a prey of faction, and an unexampled corruption of manners pervaded every class of society. The government, ecclesiastical and civil, had become what has been aptly styled an Hetærocracy, and was in the hands of women, illustrious by their birth, but the licentiousness of whose lives surpasses belief,—Theodora and her daughters, one of her own name, the other Marozia. The ruins of the city, the tombs and palaces were converted by the Roman capitani and gentry into forts and castles, whence they could bid defiance to

* This catalogue is taken from William of Malmesbury; but here we may observe that we shall fall into a very common error, if we do not bear in mind that, when Anglo-Norman writers are quoted with reference to Anglo-Saxon history, the quotation is not from *contemporary* authority. There was an interval of nearly two hundred years between William of Malmesbury and Athelstan, and his mere assertion would not be of more value than that of a writer in the present day who should give us a list of the articles found in Whitehall by Charles II. when he took possession of the palace. The value we attach to the Anglo-Norman writers depends upon our believing that they were in possession of documents no longer in our hands. William of Malmesbury, in the present instance, says: "Some of these presents Athelstan left to the kings who succeeded him; but to Malmesbury he gave part of the cross and the crown, by the support of which I believe that place even now flourishes, though it has suffered so many shipwrecks of its liberty and so many attacks of its enemies." See also Chron. Abingdon.: ed. Stevenson, i. 88, ii. 276.

CHAP. VI. Wulfhelm. 927.

the law, while they placed themselves at the disposal of these women, a mother and two daughters, who, to maintain their influence, were always ready to prostitute their persons, and who exercised the influence they iniquitously possessed to fill the Roman see with their paramours, their base-born sons, or their grandchildren. In 928 Pope John X. was strangled in prison. Of all the demoralised prelates who disgraced the see of Rome at this period, he alone has some claim upon our pity. He had been the paramour of the elder Theodora, widow of the late Count Alberic of Tusculum. By her dominant influence, he had been consecrated, when a young man, to the see of Ravenna, the second in Italy in point of dignity, and was afterwards advanced to the papacy. Although he did not exhibit the virtues of an ecclesiastic, or the graces of a Christian, to him nevertheless, as a statesman and warrior, Europe was under deep obligations. He undermined the petty tyranny of the nobles when he crowned Berengar as emperor; and the Saracens, having occupied a strong fortress on the Garigliano, from which they could intercept almost all communication with the south of Italy, while Rome itself was threatened, John X., under these circumstances, successfully negotiated an armed coalition between the Romans and the provinces of Benevento, Capua, and Spoleto, and, in the absence of any other military genius, he placed himself at the head of the allied forces, acting as their general. The Romans saw with astonishment a pope buckling on his armour, and riding forth in his array to battle, an episcopal volunteer. But when he returned in triumph, after the total discomfiture of the Saracens, the propriety of conduct, which was at first thought doubtful by the stricter few, became unquestionable, since, by crowning his arms with victory, it was to be presumed that St. Peter and St. Paul had miraculously interposed to sanction

the proceedings of the warrior pope. Universal, therefore, had been the applause with which John X. was received in Rome; but the popularity, which faction was obliged for a brief period to concede, was, by faction, soon destroyed; and the ungrateful people forgot his merits, expressing no sympathy with his sufferings, when Marozia, the mistress of one pope, and the mother of another, caused him to be surprised in the Castle of St. Angelo, then called the Mole of Hadrian, and conveyed him to a prison, which became what it was designed to be — his grave.*

But, amidst all these disturbances in Rome, and the total disregard of their spiritual functions by the popes themselves, the business of the ecclesiastical courts, or commissions, was regularly and systematically conducted. No stone was left unturned to add to their influence; and the officials, while, at home, they filled their purses by the fees which flowed in from the quick succession of pontiffs, succeeded marvellously in persuading the half-civilised people in the north and west of Europe, to imagine the virtues, while they gazed on the splendour, of the successors of St. Peter; or if rumours reached the remote regions to the detriment of the Holy See, to bear in mind that in the very sun itself spots may be found. If there had been in those days any liberty of the press, it would have been impossible for such a state of things to have existed.

The archbishop, on his return to the more healthy atmosphere of England, cordially co-operated with King Athelstan to prevent the occurrence here of those miseries which he had witnessed as the result of faction at Rome. His episcopate is chiefly memorable for the laws ecclesiastical of King Athelstan, which, though

* Luitprand, Hist. lib. ii. cap. xiv.—xx. Luitprand is the authority on which Baronius relies.

CHAP. VI. Wulfhelm. 927.

published and enforced in the king's name, as being the chief authority in things spiritual, as well as in things temporal, were issued with the full sanction and hearty concurrence of the archbishop and his suffragans.

When reference is made to King Athelstan's laws ecclesiastical, there are three points to which especial attention must be directed: first, the reference to tithes; secondly, the regulation of ordeals; thirdly, the reformation of the coinage.

I. The first canon stands thus:—

"I, Athelstan, king, by the advice of Wulfhelm, my archbishop, and other my bishops, command all my reeves in the name of the Lord and His saints, that they do in the first place give tithes of all my estate, both of the living stock, and of the fruits of the earth, and that all the bishops do the same of all that belongs to them, as also my aldermen and reeves. And my will is that my bishops and aldermen, and reeves, give this in charge to all that are subject to them, and that they do it effectually by the time that we have fixed, that is, the beheading of St. John Baptist. Let us consider what Jacob said unto the Lord, 'I will give Thee my tithes, and my peace-offerings.' And what our Lord saith, 'To all them that have shall be given, and they shall abound:' and we may remember, what to our terror, is written in this book 'If we are unwilling to pay our tithe, the nine parts shall be taken from us.' It is not my will that ye get anything for me by indirect means." *

From this it is perfectly clear that no national grant of tithes had been made to the Church by Ethelwulf. The canon just presented to the reader would, under those circumstances, have been superfluous. An Anglo-Saxon king, as we have just stated, was not the lord of the

* Ancient Laws, p. 83.

soil, he was simply the royal chief of the people. The country was conquered by William the Bastard, and the lordship of the soil was claimed as one of the rights of conquest; but an Anglo-Saxon king was only the largest proprietor of land, and, although, as king, he possessed certain rights on every man's estate, he had full authority only over that which, so to say, was his private property. In the present day, the rights of the Queen over her private estate at Osborne are something quite distinct from any claims she may possess as Sovereign. Athelstan could not institute a tithe on all the property of the country, but, like other landed proprietors, he subjected his own estates to the impost, without, however, stating that it was intended for the support of the parochial clergy. How the tithe should be expended, after it had been paid, was another question. In many instances, as we have had occasion to observe before, it was given to support a monastery or a cathedral church, by the clergy of which establishment, thus endowed, the surrounding parishes were served.

II. The canon with reference to ordeals is as follows: —

"If any one make a promise of ordeal, let him come three nights before to the mass priest who is to hallow it, and live on bread and salt, water and herbs, before he go to it; and let him stand at his masses these three days, and make his offering, and go to housel the same day that he goes to ordeal; and take an oath that he is not guilty, according to the common law of the accusations. And if it be water-ordeal let the rope go two ells and a half below the surface. If it be iron-ordeal, let it be three nights before the hand be undone. And let all his accusers be first demanded to give their oaths. And let them that are there, of either side, be fasting, according to the injunction of God and the bishop: and let there

CHAP. VI. Wulfhelm. 927.

not be more than twelve of either party; if he that be accused bring more let the ordeal be null, except they will be gone from him." *

The tendency of the age to see a direct interposition of Almighty God in every event, or, in other words, a superstitious belief in miracles, conduced to the support of the ordeal system †,—that is, of a solemn appeal for a verdict to God himself, as the test of the guilt or innocence of a person accused of crime. The system was not without some apparent support from Scripture, as in the trial of jealousy ‡, and in the casting of lots §, and it was recommended by the great difficulty which judges, not grounded in the philosophy of law, could not fail to experience when called to the examination of circumstantial evidence, by which the conscience was often perplexed. The water-ordeal was of two kinds. At the trial by hot water, a stone or a ring or a piece of iron was sunk into a boiling cauldron, into which the person accused was required to plunge his arm that he might draw out the deposit: at the trial of cold water, sometimes the accused was thrown into a pond, laden with weights, and his guilt was declared by his sinking; at other times he was thrown in, unweighted, and then his sinking was a sign of his innocence. In the ordeal of hot iron the accused walked over heated ploughshares; or else he carried in his hand a piece of red-hot iron nine times the length of his foot. The foot or the hand was immediately bound up and sealed; at the end of three days the bandage was removed, and according to the appearance of the hand or of the feet, the guilt or innocence of the party under trial was declared. There was also the

* Ancient Laws, p. 90.

† Ordeal, from *or*, great, and *deal*, judgment. Ducange, in voce.

‡ Numbers, v.

§ Joshua, vii.

ordeal by corsned *, in which the accused had to place in his mouth a slice of bread or cheese; if he ate freely and without hurt he was considered innocent; he was declared guilty if it stuck in his throat and had to be extracted;—the bread in the eucharist was sometimes employed. The ordeal by wager of battle, in which two parties fought out their quarrel in presence of the court, although generally supposed to have been introduced by the Normans, was probably in use before the conquest. To the ordeal of cold water some aged females, under the accusation of witchcraft, were exposed so late as the reign of James I.; and the law which sanctioned the wager of battle was repealed within our own memory. Abraham Thornton, who in 1818 had been tried for a rape and murder in the parish of Sutton Coldfield and acquitted, was, under the provisions of the obsolete law, indicted a second time, but escaped because the nearest of kin refused to enter the lists.

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Although the clergy were employed as judges in most of these cases, this system of trial was never sanctioned by the Church †, and probably, therefore, the clergy felt themselves at liberty to assist accused persons to escape, through their means, from the extreme severity of the law. Planck informs us that, in all recorded cases, the issue of these ordeals was favourable to the persons accused.‡ If, as he supposes, they had recourse to a pious fraud to save the lives of the innocent, though fraud can, in no case, be justified, yet we may truly say that worse things have been done under the name of religion, in modern times as well as in ancient. The following de-

* The word is derived from *cor*, *kur*, trial, proof, and *snæd*, a piece or mouthful. See Thorpe's Glossary.

† Alban Butler, in his "Life of Edward the Confessor," shows that ordeal was very generally censured, though it was certainly tolerated.

‡ Planck, iii. 543–6, quoted by Robertson, ii. 225.

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scription of trial by ordeal will be read with interest, as coming from a contemporary author :—

"Jussit adesse hominem; timidus stetit ille vocatus,
Ignis adestque ingens, et, mandat ut ipse, ministri
Projiciunt sarmenta rogo, flammæque voraci
Inmittunt rigidam nimio cum pondere massam,
Quæ statim prunis recalescit et igne rubescit.
Tum jubet ignitum judex producere ferrum;
Paret ei famulus, productus ab igne chalybsque
Exarsit candens, scintillat, et undique fervens
Stipitibus geminis solitoque imponitur, et mox
Compulit ipsum hominem massam portare; coactus
Accessit, nudaque manu timide excipit illam,
Et portat chalybem multo carbone rubentem.
Protinus incandens ardura replevit, et ingens
Illius volam nimio turgore perustam,
Signaturque manus statim de more sigillo,
Usque diem quem Phœbus agit lustramine terno."*

III. The law with respect to the coinage stands thus :—

"And we decree that the coin be the same over all the king's dominions, and that none be minted where there is no gate. If the coiner offend, let the hand with which he committed the crime be struck off and set up over the minting-house. If he be accused and will purge himself, then let him go to the hot iron, and let the hand with which he is accused to have committed the crime make the purgation. And if he appear guilty by the ordeal, let him be dealt with as is before said. At Canterbury let there be seven coiners; four of the king's, two of the bishop's, one of the abbot's. At Rochester three; two of the king's, one of the bishop's. At London eight. At Winchester six. At Lewes two. At Hastings one. At Chichester one. At Hamton two. At Werham two. At Excester two. At Shaftesbury two. At every other borough one." †

* Wolstan, A.D. 990, from a MS. Reg. 15 C. vii. fol. 106, transcribed by Wright, Biog. Brit. Lit. i. 473.

† Athelstan's Laws Ecclesiastical. Johnson, Laws and Canons, i. 342. Ancient Laws, p. 88.

Prior to this ordinance, every lord of a city, not only exercised the privilege of coining, but stamped the money either with his name or with his effigies *; but henceforth this right was restricted.† Although the archbishop was still privileged to have a mint, he had authority to coin money only in Canterbury, and was not permitted to have it stamped with his likeness. There was to be one kind of money throughout the realm, and it was to have on it the name and superscription of the king. There are occasional references to the archiepiscopal mint in the history of the Church down to the time of the Reformation, but I believe no archiepiscopal coins have been discovered from this period until the time of Archbishop Warham.‡

The attention now paid to the state of the coinage marks an advance in civilisation, and the progress of commerce; it shows that Athelstan's claim to be the king of the whole English race, to be, in fact, King of England, was not vain boasting or a mere assumption; and it exhibits the hero of the field of Brunanburgh, second only in importance to the battle of Ethandune, in the character of a statesman and legislator.

It was the fate of Wulfhelm to outlive the king, and as in our next chapter we shall have to deal with characters very different from those which have hitherto passed in review before us, in order that we may be able to appreciate their virtues as well as to condemn their faults, it may be proper to offer a few remarks upon the state of the country as it was left by the noble Athelstan and Wulfhelm his archbishop.

* Selden, Notes on Eadmer, p. 217.

† We have already seen how this right was exercised, in the life of Ceolnoth.

‡ Ruding, iv. 285. The coins of his successor, Archbishop Cranmer, are marked T. C. = Thomas Cantuariensis.

CHAP. VI. Wulfhelm. 940.

When we compare the condition of England with the state of Italy at this time, when we pass from the vile orgies which, under Theodora and Marozia, polluted the papal palace *, to the chaste household of Alfred, shedding a moral influence on all around; when we contrast the dissolute and licentious men who paganised the see of Rome with the character of the contemporary archbishops of Canterbury, against whose upright moral conduct history brings not the shadow of a charge; or when, coming to England itself, we compare the courts of Alfred, Edward, and Athelstan with those of Ethelbald and Offa, we are prepared to contend, that the labours of Alfred, for the elevation of his race and country, were eminently successful; we should even attribute to this cause that impatience of the abuses, still remaining to be remedied, which called into existence the new race of reformers, whose history will be given in next chapter.

Although, in comparison with other nations, the aspect of affairs in England, at that period, is such as to give satisfaction to those whose patriotic sentiment extends to the past as well as the present; yet, persons of sterner mood, when they come to the positive condition of the country, will not be surprised when they hear that the cry for reform was loud and earnest. The cultivators of the land were still villains attached to the soil, aided by those whom their own crimes or the crimes of their fathers had condemned to slavery. Only a small portion of the country was under cultivation, the rest was morass or impenetrable forest, the home of the wolf and the outlaw. Oatmeal and beans were the ordinary food of the labouring class, and the strict laws which, through Church in-

* The degraded state of the Popedom is described by Baronius in terms severely indignant and just.

fluence, were enacted for their protection, indicate the cruelty and evils to which they were exposed in quarters which the arm of the law was unable to reach.

Except a minster here and there, and a few remnants of Roman grandeur, there were few stone buildings to be seen; the houses, even in the towns, were only thatched huts. A wooden platter and a few drinking-horns were the furniture of an ordinary abode. Mead was the chief drink, and this, as well as wine, was taken to excess. Nothing can give us a better idea of the rude rough manners of the time, than the account which has been handed down to us of King Edmund's death. He was giving a feast at Pucklechurch, in Gloucestershire, when a man, upon whom the king himself had passed sentence of outlawry, after an exile of six years, returned, and not only took his place at the royal table, but actually seated himself close to the king. The king motioned to his cupbearer to remove the intruder, who resisted. Upon this, the king rushed upon him, seized him by the hair and dashed him to the ground. The outlaw meantime had drawn his dagger and plunged it into Edmund's breast, who immediately expired. The assassin was cut in pieces by the royal guards.*

If these were the manners of the king's palace, what must have been those of an ordinary household.

The Church had done much to civilise the people, but, under the miseries of the Danish invasion, the Church had been crippled in her resources. Hence the necessity of Alfred's reformation. But his reforms had as yet chiefly operated upon the higher order of mind, and

* Sax. Chron.; Fl. Wigorn.; William of Malmesbury, ii. 144. The anecdote shows how completely the Anglo-Saxon king was one with his people, and how easy of access.

CHAP. VI. Wulfhelm. 940.

upon the ecclesiastics qualified to adorn the more elevated positions of the Church. The inferior clergy had not yet been reached.

The secular clergy had, for many years after the Church had ceased to be a mere missionary station, been eminent for their zeal, their piety, and their domestic virtues. But the feeling of the age ran violently against the married clergy, who were regarded as persons of an inferior caste. And they who were thus treated as a degraded class, became, as is usual in such cases, too often reckless in their conduct, and, since they had no character to sustain, sank into the sins which were at first unjustly laid to their charge. The religious treated the wives of the clergy as mere concubines, and applied to them the most shameful and disgusting epithets, so that respectable women were debarred from receiving priests for their husbands.* The very courts of law were influenced by the public feeling, and on that account the wives of the clergy could seldom obtain redress when they complained of wrong. An unprincipled clergyman, when wearied of the restraints and responsibilities of a family, would forsake his wife and children, sometimes under the plea of conscience, at other times to form a new connection.

Although there were monasteries in England, the inmates were scarcely regarded by the stricter class of religionists as monks. Each monastery had its own rules and regulations. In some†, the monks were married

* Heloise thought it would be a degradation to become the wedded wife of Abelard, but regarded it an honour to be his mistress. What a depraved state of morals does a sentiment like this suggest!

† "In the time of Odo and Dunstan the clergy in England, in common with their brethren over a great part of the Continent, were, many of them, we may perhaps say most of them, married men. At that time, strange as it may seem to modern ears, this might be said of the monks

men. Under these circumstances the new class of reformers now arose, of whom the leaders were Odo, Dunstan, and the celebrated Thurketul, generally called the Chancellor. They determined to reform the Church, first by constraining the clergy to celibacy, and secondly by forcing the Benedictine system upon the monasteries, and by introducing it, when feasible, into the cathedral establishments. Less wise than Alfred they did not distinguish reform from revolution, and like all persons concerned in revolutionary movements, they were sometimes forced into actions which, in their calmer moments, they must have condemned.

CHAP. VI. Wulfhelm. 940.

We can only understand the complicated portion of history upon which we shall enter in the next chapter, by bearing in mind that the Anglo-Saxon Church was now divided into two parties, which we may designate as the party of the secular clergy, and the Benedictine or Dunstanite party. The Benedictines had for their ideal an imaginary standard of perfection, for which the vow of celibacy was the preparation, and strict monastic observances the consummation. The secular party consisted chiefly of men of plain common sense, who thought that while all sin is to be renounced, the blessings of this world are to be gratefully enjoyed, even by those whose hearts are set upon things above.

These parties came into existence during the lifetime of Wulfhelm, but he succeeded, — the natural wish of an aged man, — in keeping things quiet, and no active mea-

as well as the parochial priesthood. The monks of St. Benedict, introduced by Wilfrid and Benedict Biscop, took the vow of chastity, as it was called. But the monks of Wales and Iona gave no such pledge, and often availed themselves of the liberty to marry. During the ninth century the Benedictines were all but annihilated by the swords of the Danes."—*Vaughan*, p. 230.

CHAP. VI. Wulfhelm. 942.

sures were taken by the aggressive party, — that of the Dunstanites, — before his death, which took place in the year 942. He was buried in St. John's Chapel, in Canterbury cathedral. His remains were afterwards removed to the south upper wing, before the altar, where his corpse remained till Conrad's choir was burnt.*

* Dart.

CHAP. VII.

FROM ODO TO EADSIGE.

Odo.—Anglo-Saxon Missions.—Odo by birth a Dane.—Converted.—Disinherited by his Father.—Patronised by Athelm.—Specimen of his Latin style.—Accompanies Athelm to Rome.—Becomes Naval Chaplain.—Bishop of Ramsbury.—Military Prelates.—Odo at Brunanburgh.—Translated to Canterbury.—Embraces the Party of the Regulars.—Becomes a Monk.—Restores Canterbury Cathedral.—His Pastoral Letter.—Introduction of the Benedictine Rule.—Death of Edred.—Character of Edwy.—Profligacy of Edgar.—Edwy's Marriage.—Coronation Feast.—Temporary Triumph of the Secular.—Reaction.—Odo divorces Elgiva.—Death of Elgiva.—Odo vindicated.—Attends Edred to Northumbria as a Negotiator.—Translation of Wilfrid's bones.—Form of Espousals.—Death of Odo.—His Epitaph. *Dunstan.*—Glastonbury.—Irish Monks.—Dunstan's Retreat.—Brain Fever.—Dunstan at Court.—Persecuted.—Alleged Power—Ventriloquism.—Dunstan in love.—Elphege the Bald.—Return of Dunstan's disease.—Dunstan an Anchorite.—Recalled to Court.—Benedictine Rule at Glastonbury.—Policy of Dunstan and Thurketul.—Dunstan's friendship for Edred.—Declines Bishopric of Winchester.—Death of Edred.—Dunstan accused of Malversation.—Banished.—Expulsion from Glastonbury.—Triumphant Return.—Bishop of Worcester and London.—Elfsin.—Brithelm.—Dunstan Archbishop.—A Statesman.—Edgar's Character.—Coronation of Edward.—Beornhelm.—Synod of Winchester.—Synod of Calne.—Ethelred the Unready.—Literary character of Dunstan. *Ethelgar.*—Abbot of Newminster.—Ethelwold.—Ethelgar, Bishop of Selsey.—Translation to Canterbury. *Siric.*—Abbot of Glastonbury.—Bishop of Ramsbury.—Danegelt.—Abundance of surface Gold.—Visits Rome.—His Itinerary first published.—Dedication of Elfric's Homilies to Siric.—De duobus Elfricis. *Elfric.*—Pupil of Ethelwold.—At Winchester.—At Cerne.—Homilies.—Pastoral Charge.—Bishop of Ramsbury.—Translated to Canterbury.—His Will. *Elphege.*—General History.—The Danes.—Alfred's Policy.—Edgar's Guard.—St. Brice's Day.—Sweyn's vengeance.—Deerhurst.—Bath.—Elphege, Bishop of Winchester.—Canterbury besieged.—Conduct of Elphege.—Made prisoner by the Danes.—Refuses to be ransomed.—Is murdered. *Living.*—Bishop of Wells.—Translated to Canterbury.—Fled the country.—State of the country described by Florence of Worcester.—Returns with Ethelred.—

Synod of Haham. *Ethelnoth.*—Dean of Canterbury.—Chaplain to Canute.—Character of Canute.—Ethelnoth consecrated by Wulfstan, Archbishop of York.—Bishops nominees of the Crown.—Ethelnoth visits Rome.—Benedict VIII.—Relics purchased for Coventry.—Canute's Letter to the Archbishop.—Ethelnoth refuses to crown Harold Harefoot. *Eadsige.*—Admitted a Monk at Folkstone.—Bishop of St. Martin's.—Translated to Canterbury.—Goes to Rome.—A Boy Pope.—Crowns Edward the Confessor.

ODO.*

CHAP. VII. Odo.

THE British Christians have been justly censured for a neglect of duty in not attempting the conversion of their enemies. The same accusation cannot be brought against the Anglo-Saxons, of whose success in their missions to the Danes, we have a memorable instance in the conversion of the distinguished prelate upon whose history we are about to enter.

Odo † was the son of a Dane of noble birth, who had been one of the chieftains engaged in the Danish invasion of 870. His father, having followed the fortunes of Hinguar and Hubba, obtained a settlement in East Anglia. With reference to his Danish descent, one of his ancient biographers compares young Odo to a rose

* In addition to the facts gleaned from general history and others collected by Godwin and Parker, the chief authority for the life is Osbern, whose life of Odo is in the "Anglia Sacra." But it is to be remembered that Osbern was not a contemporary of Odo. He wrote with all the bias of a party man, nearly 200 years after the death of Odo, and we can only depend upon him so far as we have reason to suppose that he has authority for his statements. His historical errors are numerous. Like many other monkish writers he had for his object less the discovery of truth than what he supposed to be the edification of his readers; hence his relation or invention of miracles. Wharton ascribes the biography to Eadmer, but Mabillon in the "Acta Sanctorum Julii iv." attributes it to Osbern, a monk of Canterbury, 1070. There is also a sketch of Odo's life by William of Malmesbury in his "De Gestis Pont. Ang." in the "Scriptores post Bedam," evidently founded on other authorities.

† He is also called Oda and Odi, in the modern form it is Oddy.

springing from a thorn, or to a precious odour arising from an earthen vessel. To make the comparison correct, we must admit, that to the plucked rose some thorns adhered to the last, and that, however precious the odour, some savour of the earthen vessel was never lost.*

The young barbarian, looking out for excitement, was attracted by the preaching of a Christian missionary. The missionary, probably, as was then the custom, gathered a crowd around him by acting first as a gleeman, employing the charms of music and the Psalms of David, to win an audience. Odo heard the glad tidings, followed the missionary to his home, received instruction, and became a believer. With youthful enthusiasm, having found a treasure, he desired to share it with his parents, and confident of success, attempted their conversion. But the haughty old pagan, his father, regarded the profession of Christianity as an act of high treason. It was the religion of the Saxons, the deadly enemies of the Danes; and disloyalty to the pagan institutions of his race was, in his opinion, the first step towards enlisting under the banner of a people whom he sought to annihilate. Not only was the enthusiastic young Christian disappointed, he was obliged to be a confessor in the cause he had embraced, and to submit to corporal chastisement at the hand of his father. The father soon found that he was dealing with a spirit as stubborn as his own; and that, although his son, taught to honour his father and mother, offered no resistance, yet he remained immovable in his convictions, and in his avowal of them. In the spirit of a martyr, he rejoiced to suffer hardship for the sake of Christ, and was only confirmed in his faith, by the persecution which he endured, through grace, with a meekness that did not belong to him by

* Ang. S. ii. 78.

CHAP. VII.

Odo.

nature. At length he was disinherited and turned out of his father's house.

The missionaries did not leave their young convert unprotected, but immediately procured for him a patron in one who became interested in his history and character. Odo was naturalised as an Anglo-Saxon, and the whole scheme of Anglo-Saxon law was founded on the presumption that every freeman, not being "unaford," was attached to a superior to whom he was bound by fealty, and from whom he could claim a legal protection.* Odo found a protector in Athelm, or Ethelhelm, one of Alfred's nobles, who is spoken of in the Saxon Chronicle as the ealdorman of Wiltshire.† He is supposed to have been the son of that ealdorman who defeated the Danes off Portland in 838. His warlike talents, together with his religious ardour, so recommended the youth to his patron that Athelm regarded Odo as a son, and Odo repaid his kindness with the fervour of filial devotion.

The first duty towards his adopted son which would suggest itself to the mind of a noble of King Alfred's court was strictly performed by Athelm. He placed the young Dane under tutors, who reported favourably of his diligence and talents. He studied Greek as well as Latin, and is said to have excelled in composition, in verse as well as in prose. What his excellence may have been in Latin verse-making, then, as now, the test of scholarship, we have no means of judging; but the specimen of his prose writing, which has been handed down to us does, by no means, substantiate the high literary character given by his biographers to the adopted son of Athelm, who afterwards became Archbishop of Canterbury. The only fragment of his composition, besides that which will be presently given in his pastoral letter, now

* Palgrave, i. 14.

† Angl. Sac. ii. 79; Chr. Sax. 887, 898; Asser, p. 491.

remaining to us, is an introductory epistle found in some manuscripts of Fridegode's life of Wilfrid; it is printed in the second volume of the "Anglia Sacra." As the object is to present the reader with a specimen of the peculiar style of the writer, it is here given as in the original: —

"Orthodoxæ fidei famulitio ancillatis, eisdemque ecclesiastico antistantibus proposito quaquaversum orbis, tam instantibus quamque futuris, Odo Dorobernicarum opilio ovillarum in Sanctæ humilitatis consortione collegium et in concessu inexhaustæ beatitudinis tripudium.

"Sagax humanæ curiositatis industria, dum jugiter aggeratim sibi provideat labilia, adeo plerumque protelatur philanthropiâ; ut intransmeabiles naturæ metas insolenter præteriens undecunque et jam inficiando conquirendum fore præordinet. Etenim ex quo Paradisi terrestris primicola viperina minùs præsensit eludia, dilatoque mortis compendio debitâ molestè cœpit afflictari solertiâ, insopibili ferè mundialis enormitas grassatur parsimoniâ, unde et obstinatioris parcitatis silvescente propagine, fasque nefasque [illegible] non admodum discretè compaginat. Enim vero nobis inevac[illegible]tatis testudine galeatis congruit normalibus agenda rubricare [illegible] catenus præcipuè: ut cœnulenti floccipendentes lucra co[illegible]merci[illegible]pheticis conse[illegible] tibus studeamus aptari. Mihi autem dicentes, adhærere Deo bonum est. Qua in re ex diametro connectatur; non ei famulari non bonum est. Si quidem quorsum hæ velint evadere minutiæ, hujusce miscello brachilexii contignabo. Innumeras Anglorum Imperium sustinuisse olim discordias, quibus et antiquorum vulnere domicilia patrum, et multa religiositatis unione fuscata, theorici cultûs absolvere seminia, neminem ejusdem prosapiei phisilegam nescire profiteor. (Igitur venerabilissimas Beati Confessoris Christi Wilfredi reliquias indecenti sentinosæ voraginis situ marcidas, imo quod dictu quoque meticulosum est, Prælatorum horripilatione neglectas, cum inde favente Deo scilicet et loco sepulchri ejus quidam transtulissent; reverenter excepi, atque intra ambitum Metropolitanæ, cui gratiâ Dei præsideo, Ecclesiæ collocavi.) Præsertim cogente illo Evangelistæ testimonio, meo videlicet apologetico. *Quia ubicunque fuerit corpus, congregabuntur et Aquilæ.* Itaque tantæ tamque

CHAP. VII. Odo.

Deo dignæ affinitatis delectatus vicinitate, et editiore eas enthecâ decusare, et excerptis de libro vitæ ejus flosculis, novo opere pretium duxi carmine venustare. Illud quoque astruendum in calice, ne qui me caperato gangit, suscendum supercilio impidissimo Dei nutui absurdè nitatur refragari; dum fit in terrâ nihil sine causâ. Quando quidem imperitate vitat illud comicum; auribus teneo lupum. Porro acerbæ ternicositatis injectaque deperationis angelogias intrito universalitatis epithemate et ambrosio dictionalitatis collemate indulcabo, ringens cum giganticidâ Domino. *Ego in Domino speravi. Omnis sperans in Domino exultabit et lætabitur in misericordiâ ejus. Ego igitur exultabo et lætabor in misericordiâ ejus.*" *

The truth is, that while Odo gave ample proof of the sincerity of his religious convictions, and the fervour of his piety, his tastes and his genius were military. He entered holy orders unwillingly, and at the earnest desire of his patron †; but he previously served as a soldier in the wars of Edward the Elder, and was *three* times in the field after he became a bishop.

His gratitude to Athelm was shown in his enthusiastic devotion to his service, [illegible] we have an instance on [illegible] A.D. 887. Athelm obtained the king's permission to follow the fashion, and to pay a visit to Rome, and being commissioned by the king to convey certain presents to the Pope, he was attended by a large retinue, among whom was Odo. The ealdorman was seized with a dangerous disease on his journey, and remained for a few days in extreme danger. He desired his attendants to proceed on their way, that the king's business might not be hindered. Odo alone refused to leave his paternal friend, and waited upon him with all the kindness of a nurse. Athelm grew worse and worse, and Odo was incessant in prayer. He seems to have excited himself,

* Anglia Sacra, ii. 50. I have not attempted to correct the corruptions of the text.

† Ang. Sac. ii. 79.

in his devotions, to that state of fervour of which we have had examples, of late years, in the history of Methodism; and all night long was the poor youth upon his knees imploring the divine aid in behalf of his dying benefactor. But if exertion without prayer is presumption, prayer without exertion is mockery; and Odo, though at this time an enthusiast, was still a practical man, who believed that God acts through the employment of secondary means. When he rose from his knees and saw his patient sinking, he ministered to him a strong stimulant. It happened to be the very remedy that the case required, and had immediate effect. Athelm was composed to rest; he woke, feeling that the disease had left him; he grew stronger every day, and when he joined his companions he presented Odo to them as a Thaumaturgus. CHAP. VII. Odo. 887.

The duties of the embassy having been performed, Odo returned to England, there to kneel once more by the bedside of his friend, whose sickness was now unto death. The death of Athelm was soon followed by that of Alfred.* 898.

At what period of his life Odo received holy orders it is difficult to say, but he declined making any great profession of godliness, and remained one of the secular clergy. Alfred had created a navy, which was maintained in its efficiency by Edward the Elder, and Athelstan; and, according to Osbern, Odo became spiritual adviser to "many of the nobles on the coast," or, in other words, he acted as naval chaplain. Never perhaps was he in a situation better suited to his abilities and his tastes, and his biographer is careful to inform us that, while engaged in this character, he was careful himself to attend the daily services of the Church, and that he prevailed upon many of

* Chr. Sax. 898.

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Odo. 898. the laity to follow his example. We are not surprised to find that a man, who united the virtues of an ecclesiastic and scholar with those of a soldier, was popular with the nobles of the coast, or that this excellence on his part commended him to the notice and approbation of such men as Edward the Elder and the illustrious Athelstan.

926. In 926 he was consecrated to the little diocese of Ramsbury, which in 1078 merged into that of Salisbury.* Of his conduct in his new diocese we have no account, and probably his episcopal duties were subordinate to his military avocations. A bishop in those days did not consider a command in the field of battle more incompatible with his sacred office, than we should regard a seat in Parliament at the present time. A bishop is required in Parliament to stand as a polemic, to raise his voice in defence of Christianity against the increasing forces of the infidel, and to defend his flock against the onslaught of the pagans; a bishop of the tenth century uplifted his right hand and girded on his armour, using not a sword indeed, for that was contrary to clerical etiquette, but a yet more formidable weapon, a club studded with spikes.

937. At the famous battle of Brunanburgh the Bishop of Ramsbury was present. He was certainly in the hottest part of the field; and King Athelstan was probably indebted to him for his life. The warriors were engaged in a hand-to-hand fight. As the chronicler describes it, shield clashed with shield, and boss was pressed against boss, when the king's sword broke off at the hilt. Odo was at hand, and snatching up a sword from among those with which the field was strewed, placed it in the royal hand, which knew full well how to use it to the destruction of his foes. Founded upon this fact a pretty legend

* W. Malmesbury, Gesta Pont. lib. i.

Odo. 937.

was invented in the following age. We are told that when the king's sword was broken, and, the enemy renewing their charge, the English ranks were filled with alarm; the venerable Odo, who had stood at a distance from the battle engaged in prayer, rushed forward, and demanded of the king what he required? He hears that his sword was broken, and then exclaims, "What is this? what do you want? There is your sword hanging, all uninjured, at your side, and yet you complain that it is shattered to pieces. Be yourself again; place your hand upon the scabbard. Draw forth the sword; and the right hand of the Lord shall save you. Fear not. The sun shall not set, before the enemies of the Lord who have risen up against thee shall perish." After this set speech — for the delivery of which it is presumed both parties suspended their arms for a brief season — the people who heard it were filled with astonishment, and casting down their eyes, they saw hanging by the king's side what they had not seen before—his own good sword. The king was greatly comforted in the Lord. He drew the sword, and cutting away to the right hand and to the left, he put to flight or killed upon the spot all who encountered him.*

If his warlike propensities did not prevent Odo from accepting the bishopric of Ramsbury, he was taken by surprise when, at the death of Wulfhelm, it was proposed to translate him to the diocese of Canterbury, and make him primate of all England. Although the pretexts he advanced for declining the Metropolitan See were unsubstantial and easily overruled, we may readily believe that his disinclination to accept the office was real and sincere.

But Edmund was now upon the throne, and had for his minister one who, like all distinguished statesmen,

* Ang. Sac. ii. 80.

CHAP. VII. Odo. 942.

had a clear insight into character. Dunstan knew his man when he selected Odo for the archiepiscopal chair. He knew that if he undertook the office he would throw himself heartily into it, and perhaps he had already seen in the Bishop of Ramsbury symptoms of what the religious world of that age regarded as conversion.

Odo took a decided step. He forsook the party of the secular clergy to which he had hitherto belonged. He expressed his opinion that no one was fit to be an archbishop unless he had first become a monk — one of the religious. He regarded no one as worthy the name of a monk except a Benedictine. No Benedictine monastery existed in England; he repaired therefore to Fleury, in France, where a convent had been established on the model of the famous monastery of Monte Cassino. He returned a monk, cucullated, as it was called, with some notion of the rules of his order, and was enthroned at Canterbury in the year 942.

He found the cathedral in a state of dilapidation, partly through the depredations of his own countrymen, the Danes, and partly through the carelessness with which the repairs had been conducted, occasioned, to a certain extent, no doubt, by the insecurity of the country. He took down the old roof; he strengthened the piers on which it stood; and then covered it with lead. So extensive were the restorations and improvements, that they extended over the space of three years. The church did not of course remain, in all parts, uncovered all this time. But Osbern finds a miracle in the fact that during the repairs, the service of the Church proceeded without interruption; and accounts for it by informing us that, although it was a very rainy season, no rain fell in Canterbury until the cathedral was roofed in.* The church,

* Ang. Sac. ii. 83.

we are told, was large and well filled, the archbishop being an eloquent man and a powerful preacher.

His attention was soon directed to his province, and to all classes of persons over whom spiritual influence ought to extend; and accordingly he published a Pastoral Letter, which, as an original document throwing some light upon the character of the times, is here given *in extenso*:—

"In the name of the Holy Trinity, and the one Deity. Though it be a bold presumption to give documents of pious exhortation, without having any merits of my own; yet because a spiritual prize is promised to them that strive and take pains in the race of this life, by the author of gifts, the Spirit; therefore I, Odo, the lowly and meanest that is promoted to the honour of a pall, and of being a chief prelate, have resolved to put together in this paper some institutions not unworthy of any worshipper of Christ, which I found to be of greatest authority, from the former injunctions of illustrious men, to the consolation of my lord the King, that is, Eadmund, and of all the people subject to his most excellent empire: therefore I most devoutly beseech, and with clemency exhort the minds of the hearers, that they inwardly graft them in their hearts by frequent meditation, whenever they hear them rehearsed; and by this means, at the time of harvest, gather for themselves the most peaceable fruit, by the manifold exercise of good works.

"1. We charge and command that the holy Church of God, which is founded first in the blood of Christ, and made a fair spouse by the multitude of believers, be not invaded by the violence of wicked men, and let it be allowed to none to lay taxes upon the Church of God; because the sons of the Church, that is the sons of God, are free from all earthly tribute in every kingdom. Ambrose says, 'the Catholic Church is free from royal taxes.' If any houses, lands, or farms have been taken away from Christians, or been confiscated, or granted away, we charge that they be all reassumed by the Christians, as their ancient right; for Gregory says: 'If any one rob the Church of Christ, let him be anathema, if he do not make amends.' And again: 'Whoever attempts to violate or usurp the parishes of the Church of God by rapine, let him be excommunicated by

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the ministers of the Church, and become wholly an alien from the body of Christ; for they who disdain to obey the rules of the Church's discipline are more bold than the soldiers who crucified Christ, for the Church hath power of binding and loosing.

"2. We admonish the king, princes, and all that are in authority, that they with great humility be obedient to their archbishops, and all other bishops, because the keys of the kingdom of heaven are given to them, and they have power of binding and loosing. Nor let them value themselves on account of their secular power, 'for God resisteth the proud,' &c. And let the king have wise counsellors (and), such as fear God, in the affairs of his government; that the people being instructed by the example of king and princes, may make improvement to the praise and glory of God. (He ought) to oppress none unjustly by his power, to judge between man and man, without respect of persons; to be a protector to the stranger, fatherless, and widow; to prohibit theft, to punish adultery, not to prefer wicked men, to cherish the poor with alms; for though it is necessary that every man keep the commands of Christ; yet it is more especially so for kings, and all that are in high places, who are, at the day of strict inquest, to give an account to the just judge, both of themselves and of the people subject to them.

"3. Bishops are to be admonished, that they do with all honesty and modesty, according to the godliness of our holy religion, preach and show a good example to all; that they go about their parishes every year, vigilantly preaching the word of God; lest any one, through the neglect of the shepherd, wandering in the by-ways of ignorance, be exposed to the teeth of the worrying wolves. Let none study to feed the flock committed to him for filthy lucre's sake, but in hope of an eternal recompense, for we should not delay freely to give what we have freely received; viz. to preach the word of truth to the king, to the princes of his people, to all dignities, without fear or flattery, with all boldness; and never to decline the truth, to condemn none unjustly, to excommunicate none without cause, to show to all the way of salvation.

"4. We admonish priests, that they teach their people by their

good example in the holy habit, and instruct and inform them by their holy doctrine; that their conversation excel the manners of the people in all goodness and modesty; that they who see him walking apparelled according to the dignity of the priesthood, may with good reason speak commendably of his habit.

"5. Clergymen are to be admonished, that they live canonically, with all honesty and reverence, according to the decrees of the holy fathers, giving a good example, that so the bishop may gain credit by their good conversation, the Church may be honoured, the people may be improved, to the praise of God; and that they, according to the dignity of their title, may be made worthy to come into God's heritage.

"6. We exhort monks, and all devoted to God, that in humility and obedience, day and night, they study to perform their vows, continuing in the churches where they first took their vows, in the fear of God; let them not be strollers and saunterers who desire the name but despise the duty of a monk. Let them, according to the example of the Apostles, inure themselves to the habit of humility, handy labour, holy reading, and continual prayer, being ready with 'their loins girt about, and their candles burning, expecting the good man of the house,' that He may come and give them eternal rest.

"7. We absolutely forbid Christians all unrighteous and incestuous marriages with nuns or near kindred, and with all unlawful persons; for Pope Gregory of holy memory, with many bishops and other priests in the royal house of blessed Peter the Apostle, ordained: 'If any one marry a nun, let him be anathema;' and they answered, Amen. We, following the same apostolical authority, do likewise cast the dart of malediction against such, unless upon reproof they betake themselves to satisfaction for such nefandous presumption.

"8. That when we meet in any convention, we consider what the Psalmist says by way of admonition. The Lord beholdeth the children of men, &c. And again: The Lord bringeth to nought the councils of nations, and so on to 'His own inheritance;' therefore, we ought to look to it, brethren, that there be concord and unanimity between bishops and princes, and all Christian people, that there be everywhere unity and peace to the Churches of God; nay, that the Church be one in faith, and

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hope, and charity, having one head, which is Christ, whose members ought to help and mutually love each other, as He himself says, 'In this shall all men know,' &c.

"9. We admonish that fasting with alms be very carefully observed; for these are the three wings which carry saints to heaven: wherefore endeavour to keep the fast of Lent; of the four seasons, and other lawful fasts, as of the fourth and sixth day of the week, with great vigilance; and above all, the Lord's day, and the festivals of saints, ye are to take care that ye observe with all caution (by ceasing) from all secular work. Consent to no vain superstitions; nor worship the creature more than the Creator, with magical illusions; for they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

"10. And we faithfully entreat you as to the paying of tithes, as it is written in the law, 'The tenth part of all thine increase, and thy first-fruits, carry into the house of the Lord thy God.' And again, by the prophet, He says: 'Bring your tithes into my store-house,' &c., Mal. iii. 10. Therefore with an obtestation we charge you that ye take care to pay tithe of all that ye possess; because this doth peculiarly belong to God; and men should live and give alms out of the nine parts. Let us do the truth, and remain in charity in Him who is God, blessed for ever. Amen."*

We have spoken of the Danish blood of Odo, and there remained much of the barbarian in him to the last. He was utterly regardless of the misery he inflicted in carrying into effect his three great measures of reform,—the separation of the married clergy from their wives, the expulsion of the secular clergy from the cathedrals,—and the introduction of the Benedictine rule into the monasteries. This was the great measure of Dunstan's administration, and he was seconded by the celebrated Chancellor Thurketul, who ended his days a monk. But Dunstan, compared with Odo, was merciful in his mode of carrying it into effect. It was from his unbending,

* Odo's Canons, Johnson, Ecc. Laws, i. 358; Wilkins, i. 212.

unrelaxing zeal against the secular clergy, and against the monks who desired a more lax rule than that of Monte Cassino, that the archbishop acquired the name of Odo Severus.* CHAP. VII. Odo. 946.

Everything went on, during the reign of Edred, in favour of the Benedictine party, the king being controlled by Dunstan and Thurketul, and Odo being primate; supported as this party was by that large class which seeks to unite a severe tone of religion with extreme, though sometimes unconscious, worldliness. But the secular party —the party of the secular and married clergy— notwithstanding all this, was still powerful; although like many powerful parties it was ineffective from want of a leader. It was the misfortune of the secular clergy, not their fault, that all the talents were arrayed against them, —Odo, Dunstan, Thurketul.

Such was the state of affairs when, on the death of his uncle Edred, Edwy was permitted to ascend the throne, a mere boy. Although he had not many opportunities of displaying his talents, we are told by Henry of Huntingdon† that in what related to the management of public business he was not undeserving of praise, and he showed by his conduct that his will was strong, and that, when 955.

* This title, however justly deserved, was offensive to his friend Dunstan, who endeavoured to supersede it by calling him Odo the Good. Dunstan's imagination was vivid, and he could make the best of circumstances as they occurred. As he was, when archbishop, officiating at the Holy Communion on Whitsunday in the cathedral, a dove flew in at the unglazed or open window and settled on Odo's tomb; he possibly imagined and certainly asserted that this was a visible descent of the Holy Spirit attesting the sanctity of Odo. One cannot but infer that suspicions of his sanctity must have rendered this figment necessary. Ang. Sac. ii. 86.

† "Edwi non illaudabiliter regni infulam tenuit."—*Mon. Hist. Brit.* 747. "Edwi rex anno regni sui quinto cum in principio regnum ejus decentissimè floreret, prospera et lætabunda exordia mors immatura perrupit."—*Ibid.* 747. See also Ethelwerd, ibid. 520.

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supported, he could make his power to be felt. The Anglo-Normans represent him as a profligate youth, thinking by so doing to palliate the savage acts of fanaticism of which his opponents were guilty, and which though applauded by contemporary partisans, they could not but feel required explanation and apology. In few things do we perceive the inconsistencies of the Pharisaic party, which, from the time of our Lord to the present hour, has never ceased to exist in the Church, than in the different treatment allotted to Edwy and to Edgar. Edgar, the successor of Edwy, was not only the most debauched of Anglo-Saxon sovereigns, but he added cruelty to profligacy. Neither the paternal roof, nor the convent itself, was a protection to innocence when his passions were excited; and, on one occasion at least, he had recourse to the dagger to avenge himself on the man who ventured to interpose between him and his pleasures. His reign was glorious, because, as we shall presently see, he had Dunstan for his minister, but even his panegyrist in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is obliged to confess that he "loved foreign vices, and introduced into England *heathen customs**, encouraging outlandish men and harmful people." Yet this man was extolled as a "man of God," and has obtained from monkish writers the excess of praise, simply and solely because he patronised the Benedictine party, and preferred its advocates. Against Edwy the only charge that can be substantiated is, that he contracted a marriage, which, according to the view taken of it by the Benedictine party, was illegal, because it was within the degrees of consanguinity, which, acting on the Roman law, the ecclesiastics of that party had prescribed.

It is sufficiently clear that their view of the subject was not that of the whole country, or Edwy, young as he was,

* Sax. Chron. ad ann. 958. It has been inferred from this statement that he was guilty of idolatry.

would not have been elected by the witan, who, on his father's death, had put aside the claim both of Edwy and of his brother in favour of Edred their uncle. The object of his affections was a lady of royal birth, a fact which is proved by the objection urged against the marriage, that it was invalid on the ground of the near relationship of the parties. The objection was overruled by the witan. If it had not been so, Odo would not have officiated at the young king's coronation, which took place at Kingston. It was not the custom for the wives of the kings of Wessex to be crowned as queens, the exception in the case of Judith, the wife of Ethelwulf, having given great offence, — but if the marriage took place clandestinely, which, from a knowledge that the archbishop was opposed to it, we may believe to be probable, it was no secret at the time of the coronation. The king's wife was living with the king at that time, and her mother with her.

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In an Anglo-Saxon house the hall was the principal apartment. The bowers or chambers for the females were built at a little distance, but connected with it by a pent-house of wood, and so were of easy access. It so happened that young Edwy, after taking his place upon his throne, at the head of the nobles who assembled in his hall at the coronation feast, preferred the conversation of his young wife to the riotous festivities of those who, when they met at an entertainment, seldom left it in a state of sobriety. He retired from the hall to his wife's bower, where he threw off the paraphernalia of royalty, and enjoyed himself in the society of Elgiva and her mother. The archbishop and Dunstan were indignant at conduct which, if not insulting to the thanes, was a reproach to the ecclesiastics, for not having quitted the scene of riot. Accordingly Dunstan, then abbot of Glastonbury, and the Bishop of Lichfield were sent to request the king to return and preside, as it became him, at a festival, where he had

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to perform the duties of a host. The young king was perverse and refused to return, when Dunstan lost his temper and self-control, forced the crown upon the king's head, and with the Bishop of Lichfield's assistance, dragged the unwilling stripling back to the hall, and compelled him by mere physical force to resume his seat at the head of his table.*

Perhaps more has been made of this circumstance than from the rudeness of the times is necessary. Dunstan acted probably from the impulse of the moment, and having been accustomed to direct the actions of the young king's father and uncle, could not, in his characteristic haughtiness, brook the opposition of a boy. Nothing, on the other hand, could be more natural than the indignation of the king, and particularly of his wife, to whom Dunstan is said by his admirers to have addressed language, which, if used, it is disgraceful to them to report, as they do, with approbation; and which we think it scarcely possible for him to have uttered without exposing himself, even though an ecclesiastic, to the dagger of her young husband. But be this as it may, Edwy had the power to avenge himself upon Dunstan, and he used it. He must have been strongly supported to have been able to do as he did, to a man so powerful in church and state, who, during two reigns, had been *de facto* king. Edwy knew that he had on his side a large party of the nobles hostile to the ex-minister. To the validity of his marriage the secular priests made no objection; and into the hands of the seculars Edwy threw himself, with a heartiness never forgiven by their opponents.†

* Ang. Sac. ii. 105; Parker, p. 122.

† William of Malmesbury, Gesta Regum, ii. 147 (cf. de Pontif. v. 365), admits that his treatment of the monks was the occasion of Edwy's misfortunes, "Iuit ille pœnas ausus temerarii," &c. The Saxon Chronicle, ann. 958, says that Odo separated Edwy and his wife

The subsequent history of the period is not very clear. Edwy called upon Dunstan to render an account of certain treasures committed to his trust by the late king, and Dunstan found it expedient to quit the country. Presuming on their triumph, the party by whom Edwy was now advised were not content with being restored to their preferments and their wives, but determined to make reprisals upon their enemies; and the newly founded Benedictine establishments were put under sequestration. They are said also to have seized the property of Elgifu, the king's grandmother, who was a patroness of the Benedictines. This raised an outcry, and the popular feeling was against them; the laity were generally in favour of clerical celibacy. A period of anarchy ensued. Northumbria and Mercia withdrew their allegiance, and proclaimed the Atheling Edgar their king. Wessex remained loyal, but it was only by Edwy's succumbing to the Benedictine party. Dunstan returned in triumph. Odo pronounced a sentence of divorce between the king and Elgiva. This, it would seem, the young husband at first resisted. Then was the natural severity of Odo's character increased by that party spirit — that fanaticism — which rendered him utterly remorseless. He sent his military servants to

"because they were too nearly related." The Benedictine party, represented by Anglo-Norman chroniclers, speak of the wrongs done by Edwy to their monasteries; but it is more than doubtful whether more than two monasteries of Benedictine monks existed in England at this time, one at Glastonbury, another at Abingdon. (See Wharton's Anglia Sacra, ii. 105.) The party feeling with which the vilest calumnies were heaped upon Edwy and his wife only shows, as we shall have in too many instances to deplore, that malignity is the last of the passions which religion overcomes. There is no contemporary history, except the Chronicle. Florence of Worcester, who is the first who treats on this subject, was a Benedictine monk of Worcester in the twelfth century.

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force the divorced wife from her husband's palace,—from his arms; and we hardly dare to hope that they exceeded his commands, when, with a brutality in these days scarcely conceivable, they thought to make her an object of disgust to the king, who loved her with the ardour of a first love, by branding her face with hot irons. In their fanaticism on the subject of celibacy, there were not a few persons, in the middle age, who were perfect misogynists; while their notion of the bond which unites the hearts of persons of different sexes, shows a grossness which, of itself, reveals the intrinsic evil of their system.

The story of Edwy and Elgiva is too well known to require repetition here. She was banished to Ireland. But as she was torn from her husband's home by force of arms, she was invited to return to him, and prepared to do so, when she had recovered from her wounds. Being a high-spirited woman, she would, doubtless, have never rested until she had forced the archbishop, if not to repeal the sentence of divorce, at all events to grant a dispensation, which even he could not deny to be lawful, and therefore, when she unfortunately fell into the hands of her inexorable enemies at Gloucester, she met with no mercy. They caused her to be cruelly mutilated, by severing the sinews of her legs, not probably with the intention of destroying her, but merely to prevent her from again making her escape.* In a few days, however, death put an end to her sufferings, and at the same place her broken-hearted husband was soon after found a dead man.†

* Ang. Sac. ii. 84.

† Sax. Chron. ad ann. 958; Osbern, Ang. Sac. ii. 84; Fl. Wigorn. ann. 959. Turner, from a Cott. MS., says, "Rex Westsaxonum Edwinus in pago Gloucestrensi interfectus fuit." The worst feature in the whole

Whether Odo would have approved of this transaction, we cannot say; for fanaticism, that is, religious enthusiasm impregnated by a malignant spirit, is in all ages merciless. But common justice requires that we should vindicate his memory from the charge of being implicated in these proceedings, for if we refer to dates, we find that the archbishop was dead before they took place. Edwy died in October, 958, soon after this occurrence, and Odo had died in the preceding June.*

Although Odo was, on one point, a fanatic, who gave way to the impulses of a savage nature, under the notion that he was doing God service, yet he was a man whose elevation to the archiepiscopal see was an advantage to his country, if not to the Church. After his translation he did not appear as a warrior, but he was of essential service to the state as a diplomatist. In 936, when the French recalled to the throne Louis d'Outremer, who had been brought up at the court of Athelstan, the king sent him to France, under the care of Odo, who is described as a man of sound judgment and eloquence.† It was, through his intervention and influence with his countrymen, that King Edmund was enabled to effect a treaty with Anlaf and the Danes. He also attended Edred in the character of a negotiator, when that monarch invaded Northumbria. On the destruction of Ripon, Odo procured, as he supposed, the bones of Wilfrid, to do honour to his cathedral of Canterbury; although the devotees of Wilfrid in the north persevered in the declaration that the carcase which Odo translated to Canterbury was

affair is the want of feeling displayed by the Anglo-Norman writers when narrating the history.

* Flor. Wig. 958, 959. We may, indeed, conclude that some time before his death he was in his dotage, such being the inference to be deduced from the language of his successor.

† Richer, ii. 4.

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that of Wilfrid the Second, and that the bones of the veritable Wilfrid remained with them. *

It was probably on account of the clandestine marriage of King Edwy, that Archbishop Odo established a form of espousals, which is here subjoined:—

"1. If a man will marry a maid or woman, and she and her friends so please, then it is fit that the bridegroom, according to God's law, and to common decency, do first covenant and promise with him that acts for her, that he desires to have her on condition to retain her according to the divine right; as a man ought to retain his wife: and let his friend give caution for that.

"2. Then let it be known who is bound to maintain them, and let the bridegroom promise this, and afterward his friend.

"3. Let the bridegroom declare with what he endows her, on condition that she choose (to comply to) his will.

"4. And with what he endows her, if she outlive him. If it be so agreed, it is just that she have right to half his estate, and all, if there be a child between them, unless she marry another husband.

"5. Let him finish all with a pledge of his promise, and let his friend be surety for it.

"6. If they are agreed as to all the particulars, then let the kindred take their kinswoman, and wed her to him that wooed her, for a wife, and an honest life: and let him that was principal in making the match take surety to this purpose.

"7. If they will carry (her) out of (her) land, into the land of another thane, then her expedient is, that (the bridegroom's) friends give security that no hurt be done to her; and that, if she incur any forfeiture, they are capable to perform the part of kindred in making satisfaction; if she hath not wherewithal to do it herself.

"8. The mass priest shall be at the marriage, who shall, according to right, celebrate their coming together, with God's blessing, with all solemnity.

* Malmesb. G. Pontif. lib. i.; Eadmer, V. Wilfridi, c. 65.; Gervas, 1291.

"9. It is good to take care that it be known that they be not afar off related, lest they be again separated, who were at first wrongfully put together." *

We are informed by one of the most distinguished of our Anglo-Saxon historians, that all Anglo-Saxon oaths were couched in a kind of easy alliterative rhythm, and that the ancient wedding form retained in our ritual, when the wife is taken "to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part," is the very form of the espousals used in the earliest Anglo-Saxon times. †

Odo was buried on the south side of Christ's altar at Canterbury, in a tomb which was erected in the shape of a pyramid. His remains were afterwards removed by Lanfranc, and placed in the chapel of Holy Trinity, behind the altar. After the choir of Conrad was burnt, and the present choir erected, he was taken up in his leaden coffin, and placed in the feretry ‡ of St. Dunstan, i.e. on the south side of the high altar, where his bones still remain, but without any monument. His epitaph, as given by Weever, is here presented to the reader, as a specimen of the versification then, or soon after, in vogue. §

"Stemmate serenus jacet hic sacer Odo Severus.
Moribus excellens acriter peccata refellens,
Præsul et indulgens omni pietate refulgens.
Ecclesie et Christi Pugil invictissimus isti.
O bone nunc Christe, quia sic tibi serviit iste
Cœli solamen sibi des te deprecor. Amen."

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* Johnson, Eccl. Laws, i. 369; Wilkins, Conc. i. 216.

† Palgrave, Rise and Progress, p. cxxxv.

‡ "Sub feretro," Gervas, 1306.

§ Weever, Funeral Monuments, p. 213; Battely's Somner, appendix to suppl. p. 2.

CHAP. VII.

Dunstan.

DUNSTAN.*

To all the generations of men by whom Britain has been inhabited, Glastonbury has offered attractions, though the interest, through which the attraction has arisen, has varied greatly in different periods of our history. It was at one time an island, standing in the centre of an estuary, covered with fruit-trees and shrubs, and from the clearness of the waters by which it was surrounded, deserving the name which was given to it by the Britons, Ynyswytryn, or the glassy island. The Romans knew it as Insula Avalonia. The Saxons called it Glæstingabyrig, a word of the same import as that which was adopted by the aborigines. Somewhere in the fated Isle of Avalon, the outcast Briton dreamed that his great King Arthur slept in fairy bower, to awake, in due time, the avenger of his country's wrongs: hither the Irish would come, under the mistaken notion that it was the burial-place of their St. Patrick: Saxon and Norman reverenced the foundation, as they imagined, of Joseph of Arimathea: the modern antiquarian looks with respect upon the ruins of the one venerable fane which was the sole inheritance of the Anglo-Saxon from the British Church: and the Laureate almost persuades us to accept the incredible as true, when he transports us to

> "The island valley of Avilion
> Where falls not hail, nor rain, nor any snow,
> Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
> Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard lawns
> And bowery hollows, crowned with summer sea."

* Authorities:—William of Malmesbury; Roger Hoveden; Simeon of Durham; Florence of Worcester; Chron. Sax.; Chron. Petrob.; Life by Bridferth, in Acta Sanctorum; Life by Osbern, in Anglia Sacra; Life by Eadmer, in Anglia Sacra.

Such was the place which fed the fancy, cherished the genius, and excited the imagination of the celebrated prelate, whose history we are about, as far as our ability will permit, to extricate from the mass of fable by which it has been surrounded, with equal injustice, by the superstition of his admirers and the malignity of his enemies. The one party has endeavoured to elevate an unscrupulous politician to the pedestal of a saint; and the other has degraded the character of one of the greatest statesmen our country has produced, by asserting their suspicions as facts. In writing the life of Sir Robert Walpole, we should have much to censure in his conduct, but it would be unjust to withhold the credit which is due to one, whose wise counsels saved the country from the tyranny and superstition, which would have triumphed in the return of the Stuarts; and we ought not to deal more harshly with that eminent man who won for Edgar the title of Pacific. It was with a view to do justice to Dunstan, that we referred, in the life of Wulfhelm, to the state of society at home and abroad, and however frequently we may have to condemn his *modus operandi*, we must always respect the man who boldly stood forward as a reformer in church and state.

Dunstan was of noble, which is tantamount to saying, of royal, birth; for, however distantly related to the reigning sovereign, the hereditary members of the Anglo-Saxon aristocracy were in reality, as they still are by a legal fiction, the cousins of the king. His father's name was Herstan, his mother's Cynedryda.

In concurrence with that tacit education received from his romantic birthplace, Dunstan was fortunate in finding the monastery of Glastonbury a seat of learning. Such it was, notwithstanding the censures passed upon the institution by the biographer of Dunstan, who informs us that, although it was a royal foundation, the monks were entirely

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ignorant of monastic life (monasticæ religionis). He tells us that "the living in community was not yet practised in England, and that no one either yielded, or pretended to yield, his own will to the will of a superior. If any one thought fit to retire from a secular life, he might become a hermit, or, associated with a few persons of the same way of thinking, he would, at his convenience, pass from one district to another." Such was the custom with the Britons; and such, remarks the historian, continued to be the case, at the time when he wrote, among the Irish.* Osbern wrote, as a strong party man wishing to make the worst of the case, according to his view of the subject, in order to justify the severe measures of Odo and Dunstan; and we have seen, in other lives, that his assertions are to be received with some allowance and reserve. What he thought censurable we, in an age more enlightened, may regard as praiseworthy. In what relates to the submission of our own will to the control and direction of any superior, we are assured that the Almighty Being, who has invested us with the tremendous powers of reason and conscience, does not design that we should submit them to any other creature, be he whom he may. He requires us to employ them, under a sense of our responsibility, in doing the work to which, through the circumstances under which we are providentially placed, He calls and appoints us.

Our biographer cannot deny, or rather we have his authority for stating, that the monastery of Glastonbury was at this time occupied by scholars from Ireland, who were deeply read in profane as well as in sacred literature.† They sought to maintain themselves and their families by opening a school, to which the young nobility who

* Anglia Sacra, ii. 91. Osbern wrote in the eleventh century.

† Ang. Sac. ii. 92.

resided in the neighbourhood repaired for education. The professors appear to have been married men.* Those who occupied the place of assistants or tutors lived probably in common, and the whole establishment resembled closely one of our modern colleges.

Among the most distinguished of the alumni was young Dunstan. He came from his father's house so thoroughly imbued with the ancient traditions of his native place, that he was accused by the narrow-minded, in after times, of a suspicious attachment to the magic songs of the pagans; and he soon gave proof of the wonderful versatility of his talents. He was taught to regard the Holy Scriptures and the writings of the great divines of the Church as the first object of study; but he did not neglect the poets or the historians, whether ancient or modern, and he especially devoted himself to arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. His manual skill, as an artificer, was equal to his intellectual power as a man of science, and his taste as an artist. He excelled in drawing and in sculpture.* He spent much of his time in writing and illuminating books, and especially in the fabrication of ornaments. He worked in gold and silver, and even in copper and iron.†

The impetuous ardour of a youth of a delicate frame of body, full of imagination, aiming at everything, and easily acquiring that for which others had to labour long, naturally excited the admiration of his parents and tutors. They made the grand mistake of exciting him to yet greater exertions, instead of subjecting his passionate im-

* The fact that they were turned out, on the ground of their being married, sufficiently establishes the fact of their marriage.

† Turner, i. 379. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, bells which he had made for the church of Abingdon were preserved; and at Glastonbury they showed crosses, censers, and ecclesiastical vestments, the work of his hands.

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pulses to restraint. The first result of this intemperate pursuit of knowledge was a brain fever: at the crisis of which, when his friends gave him up for dead, there was an access of his delirium, and, eluding the vigilance of his nurse, he rushed to the church. It was night, and the doors were closed; but there was a scaffold outside, which had been erected by workmen engaged during the daytime in repairing the roof. He ran madly up the scaffold and wandered over the top of the building, with that impetuosity with which the delirious are sometimes seen to rush where sane men cannot stand. And, when next morning he was discovered by his friends, he was found, uninjured, in a deep though placid sleep, in the aisle of the church. The fever had left him, but how he had arrived safely on the floor of the church his friends could not surmise, and he himself could not tell; it was consequently attributed to a miracle. The thought of his having been the subject of a miraculous interference was confirmed in his own mind and in that of others when he related—and he believed as a reality what was evidently a delirious dream—that he had been pursued by demons in the shape of wild dogs, whom he had at length put to flight in the name of the Lord.*

One of the occasional consequences of a brain fever is, that the patient, after recovery, is liable, under great excitement, to a fresh attack; and it sometimes induces a partial insanity upon some one point, without interfering with the acuteness and vigour of the mind in other respects. This was the case with Dunstan. John Bunyan, the clear-sighted author of the "Pilgrim's Progress," in an after age, believed that the spirits of darkness were leagued against him, and that he was from time to time brought into direct conflict with Satan and Satanic

* Ang. Sac. ii. 92.

agencies. The spirit of the age encouraged a similar monomania in Dunstan.

Change of scene was prescribed when the fever left him, and, with his high connections, he easily obtained admission into the court of Athelstan. Here his beauty, his engaging manners, and his various accomplishments, soon made him a favourite. But his diminutive form and delicate health made him less fit for the mead-hall than for the bower of the ladies, who, knowing his artistic skill, consulted him frequently when engaged in their works of embroidery. The great favour which the young scholar's acquirements secured for him with the ladies, excited the jealousy of the other courtiers, and reports were now spread that he had learned in the Isle of Avalon to practise heathen charms and magic.

Reckless of consequences, with the rashness and vanity of youth, he took every opportunity of exercising his talents and of displaying the versatility of his powers. It is maintained by Southey that among the natural gifts or acquired arts and accomplishments of Dunstan, we are to include the powers of a ventriloquist; and certainly the supposition is confirmed by several events in his life. This power or art had not at that time been vulgarised, nor was it confined, as now, to mimics or impostors of the lowest description. If Dunstan possessed it, he, without doubt, regarded it as a miraculous gift. Such a gift he would think he might employ to further his own purposes, and these he identified with the cause of God. He would feel as little compunction, in so acting, as that which is experienced by many a modern man of genius, who, with the pen of a ready writer and with strong party feelings, communicates to the public, under a pseudonyme, garbled statements, of which he would be unwilling to acknowledge himself the author. Whether Dunstan called into play this dangerous accomplishment

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on one occasion, when he was in attendance in the bower of the fair lady Ethelwyne, and was superintending her work, as busy with her maidens she was embroidering a clerical vestment,— or whether having invented, as some writers are pleased to suppose, an Æolian harp, he hung it against the wall until the wind, entering through the crevices, caused soft and gentle sounds to vibrate from it; certain it is that the lady and her maidens, instead of being melted into ecstasy, rushed from the apartment; and, declaring that Dunstan knew more than a Christian ought to know, confirmed by their own testimony the suspicions already excited.*

He was now accused formally before the king, and was exiled from the court; but he was not permitted to depart in peace. The cold water ordeal was that to which witches and wizards were subjected, and there were youngsters at court who were minded to test the truth of their convictions, by seeing whether Dunstan, if immersed in water, would sink or float. When he had mounted his horse they followed him, dragged him from his seat, threw him into a pond, and when he had managed to crawl to the bank they set their dogs to chase him, and these of course appeared to the imagination of the poor youth as so many demons let loose upon him from hell.

Dunstan was involved in an agony of grief, for in leaving the court of Athelstan he was flying at the same time from his lady-love. He was passionately enamoured of a young lady who, whether she were a beauty or not, had charms sufficient to fascinate his susceptible heart; her rank in life was equal with his own, and she was united to him

* Ang. Sac. ii. 94. If he employed an Æolian harp, it is remarkable that we hear no more of his invention. And although Alfred's candles are said to have burnt unsteadily from the wind coming through the crevices, we are not to suppose that they were lighted in the royal apartments; the king's chamber and the lady's bower were protected from the wind by tapestry.

by congeniality of taste and sentiment. We may presume that his affection was returned, for he hastened to Winchester, over which see his kinsman Elphege presided, to seek his permission to marry. Elphege had a high character for piety and charity, which he probably deserved, but he was a fanatic, and a fanatic, in that age, was almost sure to be a misogynist. He observed with pleasure the genius and talents of Dunstan, and endeavoured to enlist his services in the projected Benedictine movement, or at all events against the secular and married clergy. He used all his influence to persuade the young lover himself to embrace the monastic life, and that in the strict Benedictine form.*

The acute intellect of Dunstan soon perceived the fallacies which lurked under the arguments of the fanatical old prelate. He urged that the same virtues could be practised in the lay or secular life as in the monastic, and with greater effect, since what was performed in the one case upon compulsion, might be performed in the other, by an exercise of that freedom of will which is one of the high prerogatives of the rational creation. The bishop spoke sternly of hell, of the duty of extinguishing the fire of passion, and of the danger of adding fuel to the flame by intercourse with the world. For a long time Dunstan held out; but Elphege was importunate; and other considerations no doubt suggested themselves gradually to the thoughts of the young and ambitious scholar. He was conscious of power; and the very brute force to which he had been subjected, roused in him an irresistible impulse to evince the superiority of mind over matter, though cased in steel and surrounded with honours. He saw every one, but the soldier and the priest, treated with contempt, while prince and prelate were valued at the same price and stood on

* Ang. Sac. ii. 95, 96.

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terms of equality. On the other hand, his softer nature would suggest the blessedness of a happy home with her to whom his heart was devoted. Even as an ecclesiastic he might, indeed, have married; but he could not hide from himself the painful fact that, in the then state of public opinion, it was impossible for a married clergyman to rise in his profession or to obtain a respectable position in society. His heart went one way, his ambition swayed him in the opposite direction, while his religious feelings, influenced as they must have been, and as religious feelings always are, by the prevailing sentiment of the age, were not in accordance with the theological conclusion which, in argument with his kinsman, he was ready to maintain. The result of this internal conflict, in conjunction with much of bodily suffering from the ill-treatment he had received, was what might have been expected—a return of his dreadful disease. There was no kind female nurse to administer to his wants, and to speak gentle words of comfort as reason began to return. But there sat the stern, though not unkind prelate, with his bald * head and cold eye, warning him by his very look, that his sufferings were the effect of the divine displeasure towards one who could prefer an earthly bride to the spouse of Christ, and the pleasures of the world to the joys which the Holy Ghost imparts to those who seek perfection.

As in the case of a bankrupt in fortune, or a pervert in religion, when the resolution was once formed and the fatal plunge finally taken, there was, for a brief season, rest to the soul of Dunstan, and he enjoyed that peace of mind which expedited his recovery. To make quite certain of his convert, the bishop, immediately after Dunstan's recovery, ordained him to the priesthood and sent him

* There was something peculiar in his extreme baldness we may suppose, as he is spoken of as Elphege the Bald.

to Fleury, there to learn the rule of St. Benedict and to conform to the discipline of the continental monasteries.

Dunstan was a man who would do whatever he undertook with all the might of an energetic mind, and he returned from Fleury a confirmed and enthusiastic monk. He repaired at once to Glastonbury where, the Benedictine rule not being yet established, he became an anchorite. In the life of Plegmund notice has been taken of the distinction which is to be made between an anchorite and a hermit. The hermit fixed his residence wherever he chose, whereas the anchorite lived in a chamber or cell attached to some part of a church, or in a separate building in the churchyard.* The anchorite was shut up in his reclusorium to indulge, without distraction, in the contemplation of heavenly things; his cell being so placed as to enable him to see the altar, and to hear the service when it was performed. Dunstan's cell is said to have been five feet long and two and a half wide, its height was sufficient to enable a man to stand, if half his body were buried under the ground, otherwise it was scarcely breast high.†

As he entered manhood the animal passions appear to have struggled for the mastery in Dunstan's nature. Being, through those traditions of men, which made the word of God of none effect, debarred the remedy which God has appointed, his conflict with himself was often terrible. He was obliged to fly his very thoughts, and he would weary himself by labouring at a forge. Although he almost destroyed himself by fasting, he was

* Each was admitted to his class by a separate service, the one called the "Benedictio Heremitarum," the other "Servitium Anachoritarum," or "Includendorum." See an interesting paper by the Rev. Edward Turner, M.A., published by the Sussex Archæological Society, for the year 1860; and another by Archdeacon Churton, read before the Yorkshire Archæological Society, 1853.

† Ang. Sac. ii. 96.

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heard not unfrequently to shriek out his prayers for relief, and, in a return of his frenzy, he believed himself and made others to believe, that he was brought into personal conflict with the enemy of souls. Osbern, the biographer of Dunstan, gravely relates the well-known tale, informing us that the devil was wont to assume a human face, and looking in at the window of his cell, to disturb Dunstan with wanton and impure conversation. However near to madness and to folly his conduct may have been, the sincerity and earnestness of the youthful anchorite cannot be doubted; and his struggles and prayers were so far successful that he at length regained once more his long lost powers of mind, and, strange to say, was brought back to reason and to the world, by that female influence, which he was in theory pledged to oppose.

Ethelgiva, a widowed lady of royal blood, was attracted to Glastonbury to converse with one, whom she may have formerly known in the court of Athelstan, and of whose conversion and sanctity the whole Church was speaking. In her conversations with Dunstan she found sympathy and she profited by his spiritual experience. On the other hand, she persuaded him occasionally to quit his cell, and at her house he came into contact with persons of consideration and consequence with whom he could measure his mind. His ambition once more excited, he was prepared to obey the summons, when, on the death of Athelstan, the new king, with whom he had formerly lived on terms of intimacy, recalled him to the court.

He did not, at first, find his position there what he expected, and he gladly accepted the appointment, when King Edmund offered to him the royal monastery of Glastonbury.*

Having inherited an estate from his parents, and

* Chron. Sax. 943.

Ethelgiva on her death having left to him the whole of her property, he had now at his disposal an ample fortune which he expended nobly. He rebuilt the church and surrounded it with conventual buildings. Appointed abbot, he introduced the austere discipline of Monte Cassino. He dismissed the monks of the old foundation, who declined to accede to his regulations. He expelled the married clergy, from whom he had himself received the first rudiments of his learning. He did not, however, follow the example of the elder Benedictines, by insisting on manual labour, but he required his monks to devote themselves to study; and what had formerly been a poor foundation having now become, through his munificence, a nobly endowed institution, he established what became the great public school of England, during the remainder of the Anglo-Saxon period. Thus did he leave the impress of his mind upon the age, becoming not only a great instructor, but, according to the notion of the Benedictines, the first abbot, in England, of a house of what might strictly be denominated monks. His activity of mind restored him to health; and though he still had occasionally visions, his improved state, intellectual and physical, was evinced in the cheerfulness of his imagination, which represented his visitants no longer as ministers of darkness but as angels of light.

The Abbot of Glastonbury, though his vigilant eye was felt to be always resting on his new foundation, was destined to act in a wider and more important sphere of duty. His abilities were noticed by the quick discernment of the Chancellor Thurketul, and, acting on the advice of that distinguished statesman, the king recalled Dunstan to his court, and invited him to become one of his counsellors.

The Abbot of Glastonbury entered upon public life when the affairs of the country were in anything but a

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satisfactory state. The death of Athelstan had encouraged the Danes to revolt, and King Edmund had suffered a defeat at Tamworth. The disaster was more severe than the chroniclers seem to have been willing to admit, for we find the king submitting to terms the most humiliating. Not only were all the provinces north of Watling Street conceded to Anlaf the Dane, but the monarchy of all England was to devolve upon Anlaf, if he were the survivor of Edmund.*

Fortunately for the country Anlaf died in the following year, and Edmund had not only his own good sword to maintain his rights, but counsellors at hand with wisdom to direct him in its use.

944. The king proceeded against Northumbria and returned to the south in triumph; but what secured the peace of England was that master-stroke of policy, which shows the influence of a mightier intellect than that of Edmund, by which the Danes were removed from the five burghs; and Derby, Leicester, Nottingham, Stamford, and Lincoln, were colonised by the English. These five towns, which had formed a chain of fortresses, placing Mercia and East Anglia at the mercy of the enemy, were one by one reduced.†

During the prosperity which now ensued, Dunstan, in conjunction with Thurketul, was enabled to attend to the internal policy of the country, and to carry out their principles of reform to their fullest extent. The policy was steadily pursued, throughout the reigns of Edmund, Edred and Edgar,—that is to say, during the whole ministry of Dunstan,—of conferring all the higher offices of the Church upon party men, who, in compelling the

* Hoveden, p. 242, ed. Savile, admits the peace, but does not mention the condition, which, however, is to be found in Wendover *ad annum*.

† Chron. Sax. 941.

clergy to separate from their wives, and in forcing the Benedictine rule upon monasteries and sometimes upon cathedrals, incurred most of the odium resulting from these harsh measures, while they carried into effect the will of their patron. The opposition, however, was strong, and perhaps we may regard Wulstan, archbishop of York, as, for a time, its leader. It must have been a strong party feeling, on his part, which could induce him to countenance the project of a revolution, which would have set aside the Saxon Dynasty, and have placed a Dane upon the throne. When he is accused of having sided with the pagans, it must be remembered that many among the Danes, now settled in the land, were already Christians; and, as in the case of the younger Anlaf, their leading men were most of them prepared to embrace the Christian faith. But, however strong, the opposition was no match for a party headed by Dunstan, Thurketul, and Odo, with a powerful arm of a son of Cerdic to support them.

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By the death of Edmund, to the painful circumstances of which event allusion has been made in the life of Wulfhelm, the power and influence of Dunstan was greatly increased, for to Edred he became more than a minister: he was his personal friend, and the two were united by a mutual affection. Edred was afflicted with a lingering and painful disease; and was for a time unable to take solid food, — a circumstance injurious to his authority, for of a Saxon king it was required not only that he should be valiant in fight, but that he should be a good trencher-man at the social board, where the mead was strong, the wine acid, and the culinary art by no means delicate. Dunstan conversed with him, prayed with him, and converted his palace into a school of virtue. His personal attachment to the king was evinced in his refusal of the bishopric of Winchester. The king,

946.

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on his refusal, requested his mother, of whose sound judgment he knew that Dunstan had a high opinion, to press upon him the acceptance of the vacant see. But Dunstan's reply was, "most assuredly the episcopal mitre shall never cover my brows while thy son liveth."* One exception, however, he made. Odo was now advancing in years, and Dunstan stated that if the see of Canterbury were vacant, he might feel it to be his duty to accept it. His conduct is perfectly intelligible to those who can, by a stretch of the imagination, suppose a great man to be influenced by high motives. Having great objects to accomplish, Dunstan was contented with the reality of power, which he possessed so long as Odo occupied the episcopal throne of Canterbury. He was as a son to Odo, and Odo was governed by the superior mind of Dunstan. Under such circumstances, Dunstan had no temptation to leave the court, and he was unwilling to undertake the office, without attempting to discharge the duties, of the episcopate. But should Odo die, his successor might be less subservient to the will of Dunstan, and the interests of his cause and party might require him to assume the office, of which he already possessed the power.

The sympathies of the reader are probably with the party in opposition, but we must do justice to the master mind of his age, whose ambition sought a higher object than a mitre, and who began already to feel that no Archbishop of Canterbury could be in reality a greater man than Dunstan. But the hagiographers were sorely perplexed when this subject came under their notice. It was determined to canonise the father of the monks in England, and the hagiographers thought it inconsistent in a saint to decline the office of a suffragan,

* Ang. Sac. ii. 103.

and to be content with nothing less than the archiepiscopal mitre. They could not comprehend, or if they did, they would not approve of, an ambition which looked down on the highest offices, unless they could be made stepping-stones to the furtherance of great public objects. They accordingly invented a legend, and a very puerile one it is. They attributed the conduct of Dunstan to the effect produced by the appearance to him in a dream of St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Andrew, who administered to him a flagellation, such as the boys at Glastonbury frequently experienced, for having refused the see of Winchester; and they threatened him with severer punishment, if he were found hereafter to decline the see of Canterbury, which they predicted would be placed at his option. When this point is settled, the hagiographers have still hard work to square the conduct of Dunstan to their own model. In the reign of Edgar, when Dunstan had just returned from exile, it was highly important that he should assume a high position in the Church, and the see of Worcester being vacant, he accepted it, and (which perplexes the hagiographers still more) he set all the canons of the Church at defiance, and without any dispensation from Rome or any other quarter, acting on his own view of expediency, he held the see of London in commendam, being at the same time Abbot of Glastonbury. His party having been disgraced, was just restored to power. It was still, however, a question which of the two, the seculars or the monks, would carry their point; and, acting consistently on the policy to which we have before adverted, he kept the see himself, to prevent what might be an improper appointment, regardless of all that might be said against him. Although no man can rise far *above* the spirit of his age, yet a great man can defy public opinion when acting *up* to the spirit of his age; he is conscious that there is a power within him to carry

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on the age, and to leave it more advanced in civilisation than he found it. The hagiographers were not, however, to be baffled: their saint was to be defended in spite of his defiance of canons and his grasping at pluralities; and a defence was made which would be ludicrous if the allusions were not too solemn. Dunstan was right in holding the two sees of Worcester and London, because St. John presided over seven churches, and St. Paul had actually the episcopate of all churches at one and the same time.*

In alluding to the preferments of Dunstan, we have anticipated some portion of his history. Before his consecration to the see of Worcester, he had fallen from power, was disgraced, and became an exile.

955. On the death of Edred, the secular party, — the party of the married clergy and of the English monks, — was restored to power. Dunstan's conduct in opposition was certainly not to be justified. The bad points of his character came out. Of his violence at King Edwy's coronation feast, we have had occasion to speak in the life of Odo. The young king had made common cause with the party of the secular and married clergy, and the minister of the last two reigns was not likely to find favour at their hands. There was a reaction in the public mind, and the young Edwy and his counsellors soon found a pretext for hostile action. As treasurer of Edred, or keeper of his privy purse, and as executor to his last will, Dunstan had been in possession of large sums of money. It is not to be supposed that a man without any family ties, and under a vow of poverty, should have appropriated the treasures to his own use, but there was, even then, such a thing as secret service money; in the employ-

* Ang. Sac. ii. 108. This argument must not be forgotten when we come to the history of Stigand.

ment of which Dunstan was not likely to have been scrupulous. It is certain, that when called upon to render an account of his stewardship, the accounts were not forthcoming. Sentence of banishment was pronounced upon him by a legal tribunal, and his life was in danger. It is said that the outraged Elgiva, whom Dunstan's party soon after mutilated and murdered, employed agents to seize the Abbot of Glastonbury, and to put out his eyes. He eluded his enemies, and made his escape to Flanders, where he was received with the honour due to so distinguished a statesman, by the Count Arnulf. The Abbey of Blandin, or St. Peter in Ghent, was assigned to him as a residence. This was a monastery which had a few years before belonged to a society of secular canons; they had been expelled by the zeal of the Abbot Gerard, and by him a community of Benedictine monks had been introduced.

We must, however, return for a brief space to England, and mention, that before sentence of banishment was pronounced upon Dunstan, he had retired to Glastonbury, from which place he was only forced by the intervention of the soldiery. This circumstance is mentioned because it is the foundation of a legend. It is said that when the armed men were forcing him from his church, a sound was heard, which overwhelmed every one with awe. Whether it resembled the "wheezy voice of a gleesome hag," or the bleating of a calf, the ear-witnesses are not agreed. No one doubted, in those days, that it was the exulting voice of the devil; and many will, in these days, remember having heard similar sounds issuing from a ventriloquist. But the firmness and determination of Dunstan are displayed in the anecdote. Whether they heard a gleesome hag, a bleating calf, or an exulting devil, all declared that they heard something, and they were awed into silence. To intimidate his enemies, and to encourage his friends, the deep tones of Dunstan's

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voice directed the thoughts of the auditors into the channel he desired: "Foe to mankind," he exclaimed, "do not rejoice too much; however great may be thy joy in seeing my departure, thy grief will be twice as great when God, to thy confusion, shall permit me to return."*

There is no reason to suppose that Dunstan was idle during his exile, or that he confined himself to the study of the Benedictine code of discipline and doctrine. The Dunstanites in England were active. The country was in a disturbed state. In the northern provinces an insurrection took place. We must infer from the hagiographers, that Dunstan was in communication with the malcontents, and that the insurgents acted with his full concurrence. "These commotions," Jeremy Collier remarks, "which were no better than downright rebellion, are passed over without censure by the monkish historians, and all the blame laid upon King Edwy's mismanagement. Nay, Osbern has the assurance to make Providence a party in the insurrection, and blasphemously affirms that our Saviour disposed the subjects to throw off their allegiance, and prove false to their prince. And what was the reason that Providence should interfere in so surprising a manner, and that God should encourage the breach of His own laws? Osbern will solve this difficulty. He lets us know, 'twas to make way for the recalling of St. Dunstan, and put the English once more under his conduct and protection."†

Wessex alone remained faithful to Edwy. Edgar, the king's brother, was elected to the throne of the United Kingdoms of Mercia and Northumbria. The proclamation of Edgar was the recall of Dunstan, who returned in triumph. It is creditable to Dunstan, that when he had

* Ang. Sac. ii. 105.

† Collier, Hist. i. 183.

effected his purpose, his measures were pacific. He adopted a conciliatory course, not interfering with Edwy's sway over the provinces, including Kent and Sussex, which formed the kingdom of Wessex, and inducing Edgar to content himself with the title of viceroy, or sub-king, even in the dominions which he ruled.

Dunstan, so far from objecting any longer to the mitre, became, without resigning the abbey of Glastonbury, bishop both of Worcester and of London. The primacy, however, very nearly eluded his grasp. Edwy was still living, when Odo died, and the nomination to the see of Canterbury rested with him. He was true to his party, and in nominating Elfsin, he appointed a violent and very 958. injudicious party man. Elfsin was a man of royal birth, and was distinguished for his learning, but he had the bad taste, on coming to Canterbury, to treat the memory of his predecessor with contempt, calling him an old dotard. He went to Rome to obtain the pallium, and perished in the Alpine snows.

Another secular clergyman was nominated to the see again vacant, in the person of Brithelm, bishop of Wells. His error appears to have been the opposite to that of Elfsin, and he proved himself unfit for a high office in times of commotion, by the pusillanimity and weakness with which he suffered himself to be put aside for the sake of Dunstan.* Before the translation of Brithelm was completed, Edwy was dead, and Edgar forced Brithelm back into his own diocese.

Dunstan now became, in the words of Hoveden, primate and patriarch of the mother church of England.†

It is pleasant to mark the amiable points in Dunstan's character, and to see the softer effects of grace upon one

* Ang. Sac. ii. 109.

† Hoveden: ed. Savile, p. 244.

CHAP. VII. Dunstan. 959.

who, with many and great faults, was nevertheless a good and virtuous man, deserving, though often our censure, yet always our respect. We have mentioned his veneration and affection for Odo, when, resenting the insults of Elfsin, he sought to supersede his title of Severus, by designating him, The Good. But his gratitude was not confined to words. Through his interest with the king, he preferred Oswald, the nephew of Odo, to the bishopric of Worcester.

What is more striking still, is the fact, that he evidently felt remorse for his harsh treatment of young Edwy, who probably died of a broken heart. He desired that no insult should be offered to the memory of one who, if he had not wronged Dunstan, had meted to him the full measure of justice. The fact was of course the foundation of a legend, and we are introduced to the mythology of the middle age. Dunstan is represented as engaged in holy meditation,—(it must be presumed, to overcome the chronological difficulty, before his translation to Canterbury),—and as entirely ignorant of the young king's death. Suddenly he sees a troop of those infernal beings with whom his imagination was familiar, and hears them exulting over some spoil which they had won in a spiritual fight. Dunstan inquired into the cause of their exceeding joy, and was told that the king was dead, and that his soul was to be committed to the flames of hell on one condition; the ministers of vengeance were first to apprise Dunstan of their triumph, and they expected him to participate in their joy. But Dunstan had no sympathy with the devil and his angels. On the contrary, he threw himself upon the ground, and with floods of tears, made intercession for the deceased; nor did he rise from his knees until his prayer was granted, and the king's soul was liberated. The infernal troop were, of course, grieved to be deprived of their booty, and

used strong language to Dunstan, who knew how to rail in return.* CHAP. VII. Dunstan. 959.

The moderation of Dunstan surprises us, when we are told that he made no attempt to remove the secular priests from his cathedral. His object was to convert the monasteries into Benedictine convents, and to compel the cathedral clergy, where they were monks and not canons, to observe the same discipline. But when the secular clergy were canons, they were already under a rule sufficiently strict, and with this our reformer had no wish to interfere. His example of moderation was not followed by Oswald and Ethelwold, and in the dioceses of Worcester and Winchester the complaints of the clergy were deep and many. The truth is, that although he was always at his post when required, the discharge of his episcopal duties had ever been a secondary consideration with Dunstan. The clerical and monastic reformation, conducted under his auspices, was only a part of his general policy as minister of the country. His position is in the first rank of ecclesiastical statesmen, such as Becket, Wolsey, Laud, Richelieu, and Mazarin. He was the minister of Edgar, whose reign is one of the most glorious in the Anglo-Saxon annals, and he secured for his sovereign a title of which even Alfred might have been proud, the Pacific.

Edgar was a youth of only sixteen years of age when he became sole monarch of England. His character has been already described in the life of Odo. He was mean, arrogant, vicious, and cruel: on the other hand, he was brave and active, and had the discernment to perceive that his best line of policy was to follow implicitly the advice of Dunstan. Edgar reigned, but Dunstan ruled. A man who will do the work and give the credit to another, may accomplish almost anything, and this was

* Ang. Sac. ii. 107.

CHAP. VII. Dunstan. 959.

the conduct of Dunstan. He exalted Edgar, and calling him "the vicar of Christ," * asserted the royal supremacy, through which, rather than by his own authority, he conducted his ecclesiastical reforms. Thus keeping himself in the background, and having no private ends to serve, he escaped envy, and avoided giving unnecessary offence. The reality of his power was, however, sufficiently known. Henry of Huntingdon calls him the lorica or breastplate of England, and Osbern states that Edgar submitted the whole administration of his affairs to Dunstan: "Nec quisquam in toto regno Anglorum esset qui absque ejus imperio manum vel pedem moveret." †

It is to be wished that credit could be given to Dunstan for maintaining his interest in a profligate court and over a licentious king, without unworthy compromises or a sacrifice of his Christian sincerity. His ability was shown in turning the king's few virtues to the best account. Edgar was fond of pomp; Dunstan encouraged those progresses through the land, which not only brought the king into contact with the people, but afforded to the people the advantages resulting from the administration of justice, the king's court being the high court of appeal. Edgar had a taste for the sea; Dunstan encouraged that taste, by providing splendid naval reviews, which rendered efficient the navy which Alfred had established. Edgar was fond of popularity, and his public works were magnificent; he established forty-seven monasteries, and, profligate as he was, the grateful monks spoke of him as a man of godliness.

At the same time, of the extreme debauchery of the king, Dunstan could not have been ignorant; but only

* "Vitiosorum cuneos canonicorum e diversis hostri regiminis cœnobiis Christi Vicarius eliminavi."—*Privilege of Hyde Abbey*, cap. 8. Spelman, i. 438; Wilk. i. 242.

† Hunt. 749; Ang. Sac. ii. 108.

on one occasion do we find him venturing to interfere. On that occasion he was obliged to take active measures, but he acted rather as a statesman than as a bishop, and out of Edgar's vices Dunstan made political capital. Edgar might, with impunity, ill treat the ladies, who in quick succession became his wives; and he might through his vicious indulgences involve whole families in misery. But when a man yields to every temptation as it occurs, it is impossible to say to what depths of crime he may sink in the impotence of his will. On a visit to a monastery at Wilton Edgar had become enamoured of a nun whose name was Wulfrida. She resisted the solicitations of the king, who caused her to be seized, to be dragged from the nunnery and to become his mistress. A scandal ensued, and the public feeling was so strong that Dunstan was obliged, in his character of Archbishop of Canterbury, to show his determination to extend to the highest personage in the state the discipline of the Church. On the first public occasion of his going to court, the king, as usual, offered his hand to Dunstan, and the archbishop refused to take it; observing that he could no longer remain the friend of one who had Almighty God for his enemy.*

Edgar knew that he could not afford to quarrel with Dunstan and his party, and offered to submit to any penalty the archbishop might enjoin. Certain fasts were imposed; but this was a mere delusion, for in the penitential canons which were published by Dunstan, ample provision is made for evasion. The rule itself in relation to a wealthy man is this: "When the man fasts, let him distribute to all God's poor all the entertainment which he himself should have enjoyed, and let him lay aside all worldly business for the three days of fasting,

* Ang. Sac. ii. 111; Wilk. Conc. i. 249.

CHAP. VII. Dunstan. 959.

and frequent the church night and day, as oft as possible, and watch there with alms-light, and call on God, and pray earnestly for forgiveness, with weeping and wailing, and often kneel before the sign of the cross; and sometimes in an erect posture, sometimes prostrating himself on the ground. And let the great man diligently learn to shed tears from his eyes, and to weep for his sins; and let him feed as many poor as possible for those three days, and on the fourth day let him bathe them all, and distribute provision and money; and in his own person make satisfaction for his sins, by washing of their feet. And let masses be said for him this day, as many as can possibly be procured; and at the time of the masses let absolution be given him, and then let him go to housel, unless he be yet involved in so much guilt, as that he ought not to receive it; at least let him promise that he will always from that time forth do the will of God, and desist from the contrary, by the divine help, in the best manner that he ever can; that he will retain Christianity, and wholly abandon all heathenism; and rectify mind and manners, word and work, with all diligence; that he will advance all that is right, and destroy all that is wrong, through the help of God, as earnestly as he can. And he who performs what he promises to God does it to the best advantage in his own person.

"This is that softening of penance which belongs to wealthy men, and such as abound in friends; but one in a lower condition cannot make such dispatch; but, therefore, he must pursue it in his own person with the greater earnestness. And it is most righteous, that every one revenge his own crimes on himself by diligent satisfaction, for it is written, 'Every one shall bear his own burden.'"

But it is stated in the same code that "infirm men may redeem their fasting," and it is shown how this may

be done: "One day's fasting may be redeemed with a penny, or with two hundred psalms. A year's fasting may be redeemed with thirty shillings, or with freeing a slave that is worth that money. A man for one day's fasting may sing *Beati* six times, and six times *Pater Noster*. And for one day's fasting let a man bow down to the ground with *Pater Noster* sixty times. And a man may redeem one day's fasting, if he will prostrate himself on all his limbs to God in prayer, and, with sincere grief and sound faith, sing fifteen times *Miserere mei Deus*, and fifteen times *Pater Noster;* and then his penance for the whole day is forgiven him.

"A man may complete seven years' fasting in twelve months, if he sing every day a psalter of psalms, and another in the night, and fifty in the evening; with one mass twelve days' fasting may be redeemed; and with ten masses four months' fasting may be redeemed; and with thirty masses twelve months' fasting (may be redeemed) if a man will intercede for himself, and confess his sins to the shrift (with a sincere love of God), and make satisfaction as He directs, and diligently cease from them for ever." *

We regard all this reference to fasting, enjoined upon one who continued his profligate course, as mere collusion. But the practical nature of Dunstan's mind is shown in the other portion of the penance; a part of which was made to consist in the king's publication of a code of laws for the more impartial administration of justice. Dunstan also required the king at his own expense to transmit to the different provinces of his kingdom copies of the Holy Scriptures to be placed in the churches for the instruction of the people: As the expense of tran-

* Johnson, English Laws and Canons, i. 445—447; Wilk. Conc. i. 238, 239.

CHAP. VII. Dunstan. 966.

scription was considerable, this may be regarded as a pecuniary fine. To give the more publicity to the penance, it was moreover agreed that the king should not wear his crown, even on festive or state occasions, for seven years.* When the seven years had expired, the crown was placed once more upon the king's head by the archbishop, with all the ceremonials, as it would appear, of a coronation. This second coronation, as it is called, took place, however, not at Kingston but at Bath.†

We observe throughout, that while everything was done that could satisfy the public, the real penance amounted to nothing, and the king pursued his career of vice, if with more precaution, yet without intermission. The leniency of the archbishop towards the king, simply from motives of policy, is the more marked when we contrast it with his conduct towards a powerful earl, who had contracted what Dunstan regarded as an incestuous marriage. He excommunicated the offender. The offence probably was, that the parties were related within the prohibited degrees. The earl first appealed for protection to the king, but the royal interference to procure an absolution was rejected by Dunstan. The earl had then recourse to papal influence: the Pope was won over; or, at all events, a letter was written in his name entreating and even commanding the Archbishop of Canterbury to grant the desired absolution. But Dunstan cared as little for the Pope, in such a matter, as he did for the king. He had no intention to tolerate interference within his jurisdiction as metropolitan, and he replied that whosoever he were, who should sue for an indulgence, no absolution would be granted until the sin had been forsaken.‡

* Ang. Sac. ii. 111; Wilk. Conc. i. 249.

† Chron. Sax. 972, 973.

‡ "Tunc ille seipso deterior immani est furore correptus, et nihil eorum quæ possidebat alicujus esse momenti reputans, ad hoc solum

The result of Dunstan's vigorous administration was such as must have afforded him that satisfaction which is enjoyed by men, who are permitted to see that, though they have laboured sometimes amidst doubts and difficulties, yet they have not laboured in vain. Under the reign of Edgar the Pacific, Northumbria was divided into earldoms instead of kingdoms; the Danes were either subdued or conciliated; the sovereignty of the Anglo-Saxon king over the Scots was established; the navy was placed in such a state of efficiency, that no enemy ventured to attack the coast; English pirates, who had infested our ports, were restrained and punished; while at home, trade was encouraged, family feuds were suppressed, and men were compelled, instead of taking the law into their own hands, to submit the decision of their quarrels to the magistrate. Regular circuits were established for the administration of justice, forming a court of appeal from the inferior judges. As Athelstan had reformed the coinage, so now standard measures were made and deposited at Winchester.* Steps were

se totum studebat impendere, ut Dunstano excitaret scandalum, et Christianæ legis jugum, quo a suâ libidine coercebatur, sibi faceret alienum. Legatos itaque suos Romam destinat, et talibus assueta quorundam Romanorum corda et ora in suam causam largo munere, largiore sponsione permutat. Quid indè? Præsul apostolicæ sedis Dunstano peccatori homini conscendere verbis ac literis mandat, et eum Ecclesiæ gremio integrè conciliare monet, hortatur, imperat. Ad quæ Dunstanus ita respondet. *Equidem cum illum de quo agitur, sui delicti pœnitudinem gerere videro, præceptis domini Papæ liberis parebo. Sed ut ipse in peccato suo jaceat, et immunis ab ecclesiasticâ disciplinâ nobis insultet, et exinde gaudeat; nolit Deus. Avertat etiam Deus a me ut ego causâ alicujus mortalis hominis, vel pro redemptione capitis mei, postponam legem quam servandam statuit in suâ Ecclesiâ idem Dominus meus, Jesus Christus, Filius Dei.*"—*Surius, De Probatis SS. Historiis*, Colon. Agrip. 1572, tom. iii. p. 323.

* The Winchester measure was until a few years ago the standard measure throughout England.

CHAP. VII. Dunstan. 973.

taken in behalf of the herdsmen, to annihilate the wolves which still abounded in the country. Even to trivial matters could the mind of Dunstan descend; finding that quarrels arose very frequently in taverns, from disputes among the topers, as to their share of liquor, respectively, when they drank out of the same cup; he advised Edgar to order gold or silver pegs to be fastened in the pots, that whilst every man knew his just measure, shame should compel each to confine himself to his proper share.*

We are not, however, to suppose that these measures for social advancement and ecclesiastical reform could be carried without opposition or resistance. We find the secular party supported by Elfhere, the powerful Ealdorman of Mercia, who, pitying the married clergy, compelled, by the harshness of their superiors, to beg their bread, offered to them and their families an asylum in his territory; and by the Scottish Beornhelm, a man who is described as unequalled for understanding and eloquence, as well as for the excellence of his moral character and piety. And this party began to move at the death of Edgar, in 975. The widow of the late king intrigued for the election of her son Ethelred, to the exclusion of his elder brother, Edward, the king's son by a former marriage. Her only chance of effecting this was through the Anti-Dunstanites. Into their arms she threw herself, and they were prepared to purchase her support by proclaiming Ethelred king. There was nothing unconstitutional in the proceeding, although it was unusual to set aside the nearest of kin, except for some special reason to be assigned. In this case both the young princes were minors, and all that the Anti-Dunstanites had to allege against Edward was, that he, a boy of thirteen years of age, had shown symptoms of a harsh

* Hence the expression still in vogue of being a peg too low.

and cruel disposition. When the weakness of this plea was exposed, they adduced, as a superior claim on the part of Ethelred, that he was born in the purple, or after his father had come to the throne — an argument incomprehensible to the witan. Dunstan perceived the weakness of their cause, and having a strong case himself, he defended the right of Edward with eloquence, and concluded, without condescending to ask for a vote, by proclaiming Edward; and forthwith, upon the spot, anointing him as King of England.*

But, although Dunstan continued the minister of the crown, his power was shaken, and he seems to have stood in some awe of Bishop Beornhelm, who, in various synods and meetings, was adding force by his eloquence to the reactionary movement. The archbishop evidently became alarmed, and two events occurred about this period which have brought disgrace on Dunstan's name. At a council held at Winchester, which was attended by the Ealdorman Ethelwin, Ethelwold, and Brihtnoth, all advocates of the secular clergy, when Dunstan was unable to meet the arguments eloquently enforced by his learned opponent, and when the married clergy and the monks, who had been driven from their cloisters, were beginning clamorously to demand the immediate restitution of their rights and preferments, a low voice was heard as if coming from a picture of our Blessed Lord, which hung upon the wall, "Absit hoc ut fiat, absit hoc ut fiat." All were astonished, some alarmed, and the Dunstanites, in the confusion, succeeded in obtaining the adjournment of an assembly in which they were sure to be outvoted.†

Bishop Beornhelm, the Ealdorman of Mercia, and the opposition generally, were by no means satisfied with the proceedings of the Dunstanites on this occasion, and never

* Ang. Sac. ii. 113.

† Ang. Sac. ii. 112; Wilk. Conc. i. 261.

CHAP. VII. Dunstan. 978.

rested until, in 978, another council was convened at Calne in Wiltshire.

The king was not present: his life, it is to be remarked, was of peculiar value to the Dunstanites. The council was not held in the open air, but in the upper room of a house. The dispute was carried on between the parties with considerable acrimony. Bishop Beornhelm pressed Dunstan so hard that the latter attempted no reply, — a very remarkable circumstance, when we consider the character of the man. He merely spoke of himself as an old man, whose time of labour had now come to an end, who wished to pass the rest of his life in peace. As for his cause, it was the cause of heaven, and to God he left the decision. There was, as he uttered these words, a fearful crash The floor of the room had given way. All were precipitated to the ground, except Dunstan and his friends, who had the good fortune to have taken their seat on the only solid beam. Few escaped without injury, and some were killed. The populace sided with the Dunstanites, and it was supposed that the question had been decided by a miracle.*

These transactions have been of course the subject of much discussion. Some persons remind us that Dunstan was not only a ventriloquist, but also a person skilled in mechanics. Lappenberg†, on the other hand, would acquit the primate of having contrived the apparent accident by his mechanical skill, on the ground of his being too wise to have recourse to a measure which was so easily open to exposure. Palgrave inclines to the more favourable view of the subject on the same grounds. The reader will form his own opinion. I will only remark, that I doubt whether any persons, in the tenth century, would have regarded such a stratagem for silencing their op-

* Ang. Sac. ii. 112; Wilk. Conc. i. 263.

† Lappen. ii. 147.

ponents, as that of which Dunstan is suspected, as more iniquitous than the stratagems resorted to in war, to surprise and overpower an enemy. Dunstan was certainly, in moral questions, not in advance of his age, and the age accounted little of loss of limb or life to gain a point or to effect an object.

The enemies of Dunstan would have rallied again, if their party had not been annihilated by a crime, of the atrocity of which there has ever been but one opinion — the murder of the young King Edward by his stepmother. As the young king had sided with Dunstan and the monks, he was regarded by them as a martyr; but how his murder is to be distinguished from any other murder, so as to constitute a martyrdom, it is difficult to surmise.

Ethelred now succeeded to the crown, but the crime of his mother, which incapacitated her from becoming the Regent, and which consigned her to the obscurity of a prison, in the shape of a monastery, placed him in the hands of Dunstan, by whom he was crowned. *

The reign of Ethelred the Unready is one of the most disastrous in English history; but the disasters did not commence during the first years of the young king; that is, while Dunstan was at the head of affairs. On the contrary, every necessary step was, at that time, taken to withstand attacks from without, and provide against internal distraction. But the weak and foolish are always among the most impatient of the thraldom which is imposed upon them by a stronger will, and a more powerful mind. Ethelred never liked Dunstan, and made several attempts to assert his independence. It was not till the great man had been removed by death, that the king and the country were aware of the value of that strong hand which, for a long period, had held together the hetero-

* Chron. Sax. 919; Ang. Sac. ii. 113.

CHAP. VII.

geneous and hostile races by which the island was peopled.

Dunstan. 979.

Dunstan, having done his great work, was not desirous of contending with a wilful youth, who disliked and disregarded him, and he resided now for the most part at Canterbury. He was successful as a preacher, and the people flocked from all quarters to hear him. He was fluent and eloquent, but was most distinguished for the aptness of his illustrations. Mention is made of his zeal in the erection of churches, of the equity of his judgments, and of the force of argument by which he convinced gainsayers.

Dunstan's merits as a literary man were considerable. His printed works are, "Regularis Concordia Anglicæ Nationis Monachorum Sanctimonialiumque," to be found in Reyner's "Apostolatus Benedictinorum in Anglia:" and "Tractatus maximi Domini Dunstani Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis vere Philosophi de lapide Philosophorum;" in Ripley's Chemical Works. Pits mentions a copy of Dunstan's Rule, printed in 12mo. in Belgium.*

There is in a MS. in the Bodleian a picture of Dunstan on his knees, worshipping our blessed Lord, which is stated in a very ancient note, to have been executed by his own hand, as well as the writing, which is certainly of his age. The following works are also attributed to him by Bale and Pits. "Ordinationes Cleri," lib. i.; "Leges Decimarum," lib. i.; "Contra Sacerdotes malos ad Papam," lib. i.; "Solutiones Dubiorum Eucharistiæ," lib. i.; "Epistolæ ad diversos," lib. i.; "Epistolarum contra Edwinum," lib. i.; "Benedictionarium Archiepiscopale," lib. i.†

But the best specimen we can give of Dunstan's literary

* Wright, Biog. Lit. Brit. i. 462.

† MS. Bodl. NE. D. 2. 19. Wright, Biog. Brit. Lit. i. 458, 460.

and theological ability, is that which is presented to us in the canons which he published immediately upon his appointment to the see of Canterbury. * They are presented to the reader not only on this account, but more particularly for the manner in which they indicate the character of the age:—

"We charge that God's servants diligently perform their service and ministry to God, and intercede for all Christian folk, and that they be all faithful and obedient to their superiors, and all unanimous for their common benefit, and that they all be helpful and obedient to each other, both in relation to God and the world; and that they be faithful and true to their worldly lords. And that they all honour each other, and that the inferiors obey the superiors with diligence, and that the superiors love and instruct diligently their inferiors. And that at every synod every year they have their books, and vestments for divine ministration, as also ink, and parchment for (writing down) their instructions, and three days' provision. And that every priest have his clerk to the synod, and an orderly man for his servant, none that is indiscreet, or that loves foolery, and let all proceed in order, and in the fear of Almighty God. And that every priest give information in synod, if anything aggrieve him, and if any man hath highly abused him: and (let them be) for him all in one, as if it had been done to themselves; and let them so assist him, that the man may do satisfaction,

* Johnson thinks the canons were published before the translation of Dunstan was effected, because they contain no censure of the married clergy. But they could not for that reason have been drawn up by Odo, who was more strong upon the subject, and to whom, if not to him or Dunstan, can they be attributed? Dunstan's translation was contemporaneous with Edgar's accession, and their very title "Canons made in King Edgar's reign," prevents the assertion of an earlier date. Dunstan's treatment of the canons of his cathedral may lead us to suppose that his heart was softened by age and grace; or that he determined to pursue a more conciliatory policy than that which his predecessor had adopted. The patron of an extreme party may himself be a man of much more moderate views. We are also to remember that religious principles were always subordinated by Dunstan to political expediency.

CHAP. VII. Dunstan. 979.

as the bishop directs. And that every priest give information in synod, if he know any man in his district that is contumacious against God, or fallen into mortal crimes, whom he cannot reduce to satisfaction, or dare not by reason of secular men. And that no suit between priests be commenced before secular men, but that their equals be arbitrators and umpires; or let them lay their cause before the bishop, if there be a necessity. And that no priest do of his own accord desert the church to which he has been blessed and married. And that no priest interfere with another in anything that concerns his minster, or his parish, or his gildship, or in any of the things which belong to him. And that no priest receive a scholar without the leave of the other by whom he was formerly retained.* And that every priest do moreover teach manual arts with diligence. And that no learned priest do reproach him that is half-learned, but mend him, if he know how. And that no noble born priest despise one of less noble birth. If it be rightly considered, all men are of one origin. And that every priest do justly state his own accounts, and be not an unrighteous chapman, a covetous merchant. And that every priest give baptism as soon as it is desired, and that he give it in charge to his district, that every child be baptized within thirty-seven nights, and that no one too long remain unbishoped. And that every priest industriously advance Christianity, and extinguish heathenism, and forbid the worship of fountains, and necromancy, and auguries, and enchantments, and soothsaying, and false worship, and legerdemain, which carry men into various impostures, and to groves, and ellens, and also many trees of divers sorts, and stones. And many do exercise themselves in variety of whimseys to such a degree, as they by no means ought to do. And that every Christian man diligently win his child to Christianity, and teach him the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. And

* "Clergymen were educated in this age, by putting children into the family of a bishop, or a priest, or into a monastery, where they were instructed in the books which contained their religious offices; and so soon as they could read and write they received the first tonsure, that is, they were made ostiaries, though in after ages there was a distance of time between their being shaved, and receiving the first order; this Morinus shows to be a later corruption." — *Johnson.*

that men on holydays forbear heathenish songs and diabolical sports. And that men abstain on the Sunday from markets and county courts. And that men abstain from fabulous readings, and absurd fashions, and scandalous shavings of the hair.* And that every man learn to be expert in saying the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, as he desires to lie in holy ground, or to be (esteemed) worthy of the housel; for he who refuseth to learn that, is not a good Christian; and he cannot of right undertake for others at baptism nor at the bishop's hands. Let him who knows it not first learn it. And that there be no violent strife between men on festival or fasting days. And that on festival and fasting days, oaths and ordeal be forborne. And that priests keep their churches with all honour for divine ministrations and pure services, and to no other purpose; and that they allow of no indecent thing either in or next it, nor of any idle word or work, nor of indecent drinking. Nor let any dog or swine come within the verge of the church, so far as man can govern. And that nothing be lodged in the church that is not befitting it. And that men be very temperate at church-wakes, and pray earnestly, and practise nothing unbecoming there. And let no man be buried in a church, unless it be known that he in his lifetime have so pleased God, that men on that account allow him to be worthy of such a burying-place. And that no priest celebrate mass in any house but a hallowed church, except on account of some man's extreme sickness. And that the priest never celebrate mass at least without a hallowed altar. And that a priest never celebrate mass without book, but let the canon be before his eyes to see to, if he will, lest he mistake. And that every priest have a corporas† when he celebrates mass, and a subumblem‡ under his alb, and every mass vestment decently put on. And that every priest

* "It is well known that the several modes of cutting or shaving the hair were among the heathen tokens of men's being devoted to one idol or another. The Danes being heathens, or half Christians, had introduced these fashions here in England." — *Johnson.*

† A linen cloth in which to lay the sacrament.

‡ "I nowhere else meet with this term. Mr. Somner terms it *subucula*. To me it seems so called, q. *vestis subumbilicalis*; and to signify the

CHAP. VII. Dunstan. 979.

take great care to have a good book, at least a true one.* And that no priest celebrate mass alone, without one to make responses to him. And that no man take the housel after he hath broke his fast, except it be on account of extreme sickness. And that no priest celebrate mass more than thrice at most in one day. And that the priest have the housel always in a readiness for them that may want it, and that he keep it with diligence and purity, and take care that it does not grow stale: if it be kept so long that it cannot be received, then let it be burnt in a clean fire, and let the ashes be put under the altar; and let him who was guilty of the neglect diligently make satisfaction to God. And that a priest never presume to celebrate mass, unless he hath all things appertaining to the housel, viz. a pure oblation, pure wine, and pure water. Woe be to him that begins to celebrate unless he have all these; and woe be to him that puts any foul thing thereto, as the Jews did, when they mingled vinegar and gall together, and then invited Christ to it by way of reproach to Him. And that it never be, that a priest celebrate mass, and do not eat the housel himself, or hallow again that which was hallowed before. And that every chalice in which the housel is hallowed be molten, and that no man hallow it in a wooden chalice. And that all things near the altar or belonging to the church be very cleanly and decently ordered, and let what is holy be laid up with reverence, and let nothing come near it; and let a light be always burning in the church when mass is sung. And that no hallowed thing be neglected, as holy water, salt, frankincense, bread, or anything that is holy. And that no woman come near the altar while mass is celebrating. And that the hours be timely notified by ringing (the bells), and that every priest then look out his tide-song in the church, and that prayers be there diligently made in the fear of God, and intercessions for all people. And that no mass priest, or minster priest ever come within the church door, or into his stall without a stole, at least

amyt, which, as it had a head stall, and came over the shoulders, so it was strait about the reins, *in renibus stringitur*, says Durandus, lib. iii. c. 2." — *Johnson.*

* So that he have good, and especially orthodox books.

that he do not minister at the altar without his vestment. And that no ecclesiastic cover his tonsure, nor permit himself to be mis-shorn, nor his beard to grow for any long time, if he will have God's blessing and St. Peter's and ours. That all priests be uniform as to the feasts and fasts, and all bid them in the same manner, that they may not misinform the people. And that all fasts be made meritorious by alms, that is, that every one give alms in devotion to God, then is his fasting more acceptable to God. And that all priests use the same practice in relation to the service of the church, and keep an equal pace in the church service through the course of the year. And that the priest diligently instruct the youth, and dispose them to trades, that they may have a support to the church. And that priests preach to the people every Sunday, and always give them a good example. And that no Christian taste blood of any kind. And that the priests remind the people of their duty to God, to be just in tithing and other matters; first the plough alms fifteen nights after Easter; and the tithes of young animals by Pentecost; and the fruits of the earth by All Saints, the Rome-fee at Peter-mass, and Church-scot at Martin's-mass. And that priests so distribute the people's alms as both to render God propitious, and to dispose the people to alms-deed. And that priests sing psalms, while they distribute alms, and earnestly charge the poor to intercede for the people. And that priests guard themselves against over-drinking, and teach the same to other men. And that no priest be a common rhymer, nor play on the music by himself or with other men, but be wise and reverend, as becomes his order. And that priests guard themselves against oaths, and that they earnestly forbid them. And that no priest too much love the company of women, but love his lawful wife, that is, his church. And that no priest be concerned in false witness nor be complice with a thief. And that a priest ever decline ordeal, not an oath. And that a priest do not make his purgation against a thane, without the thane's fore-oath. And that no priest be a hunter or hawker, or player at dice, but divert himself with his book, as becometh his order. And that every priest teach them who confess to him, penance and satisfaction, and help them in doing it, and that they housel sick men, when there is a necessity, and also anoint them, if they.

CHAP. VII. Dunstan. 988.

desire it, and after their departure diligently cover them, and not permit any indecency towards the corpse, but discreetly bury in the fear of God. And that every priest have both oil for baptism, and for the anointing the sick, and be ready (in ministering) of rites to the people, and earnestly promote Christianity in every respect, and both teach them well, and give them a good example; then will Almighty God reward him in the manner most desirable to himself. And that every priest know to make answer, when he fetches the chrism, as to what he has done in relation to the prayers for the king and the bishop."*

In 963, he published the "Penitential Canons," already quoted, which show the extent to which the commutation of penance was now beginning to be carried. From these we shall make another extract, as bearing upon the superstitions of the age, ranking with our mesmerism and table-turning. "If any one destroy another by witchcraft, let him fast seven years, three in bread and water, and the other four years, three days in a week in bread and water, and ever lament it. If one drive a stake into a man, let him fast three years in bread and water, but if the man be dead by means of the staking, then let him fast seven years as is here written, and ever lament it." †

In 988, the archbishop, who for some time had begun to show symptoms of decay, had become extremely feeble. He preached for the last time on Ascension Day. He had to pause once or twice, and to retire from the pulpit, to which he nevertheless returned to finish his discourse. He spoke of our Lord's incarnation, of the redemption of man, and of the bliss of heaven; he exhorted his hearers to ascend in their hearts to that blest place, whither their Saviour had gone before; he bade

* Johnson, i. 412–425; Wilkins, i. 225; Ancient Laws, 395.

† Johnson, i. 438.

them affectionately to remember him when he was gone, for he had a feeling that this would be the last time that they would hear him. He was nevertheless well enough to attend the banquet in the public hall, and revisiting the church on his way home, he calmly pointed out the place in which he wished to be interred. Returning to his palace, he retired to his chamber, and there he was chiefly engaged in acts of devotion, and in conversation with his friends. On the Saturday he received the Holy Communion, and uttered the following prayer: — "Glory to Thee, Almighty Father, who hast provided for them that love Thee, the Bread of Life, that we may be ever mindful of Thy wonderful mercy in sending to us Thine only begotten Son, born of the Virgin Mary. Glory to Thee, O Heavenly Father, for when we were not, Thou didst give unto us existence, and when we were sinners Thou didst grant unto us a Saviour. Glory to Thee, through the same, Thy Son our Lord and God, who with Thee and the Holy Ghost, doth govern all things, world without end." *

These were the last words of Dunstan. On the Sunday after Ascension Day, 988, he was buried near the altar. "Osbern says that his monument might be seen from the choir and the altar; but Gervase says, he was buried in the undercroft, deep in the ground, with a pyramid over him, and at his head the matin altar. But Conrad's choir being burnt, and rebuilt, they, at night, before entering the choir, removed his body, and clothing him anew (for the vestments were decayed), and putting on him a linen girdle, they placed him in a wooden coffin inclosed in a leaden one, and banded with iron, and inclosed them in a stone tomb, secured with molten lead, on the south side of the high altar; where he rested till,

* Ang. Sac. ii. 116–119.

CHAP. VII. Dunstan. 988.

in Henry VII. time, viz. 500 years after his death, upon a pretence that he lay at Glastonbury, Archbishop Warham had his tomb opened, and his body was found in the same manner Gervase had so long before described it, and in the coffin was a plate of lead eight inches long." *

The correspondence between Archbishop Warham and the Abbot of Glastonbury, is sufficiently interesting to be added to this account of Archbishop Dunstan. The letter of Warham is dated A.D. 1508, and is as follows:—

"Honoured brother, after most worthy commendation. — It has lately come to my ears, that a certain tomb of the holy Dunstan has been openly erected by you in the church of your monastery, by which you have pretended that you have his sacred body buried with you. We therefore, being not a little moved by this circumstance, and taking into our serious consideration that the aforesaid saint preceded us in the archiepiscopal dignity of Canterbury, and died there, whence it may be most justly concluded that he probably selected his place of burial in the said church and not elsewhere; and desiring to investigate the certainty of the matter, viz. whether his body still remained buried in the aforesaid church of ours at Canterbury or no; when we were there present, a few days ago, we instituted a very diligent scrutiny. After due search then, we found in the said church of ours, a certain small wooden chest, upright, like a tomb, girt with iron, preserved uninjured, on the south side of the high altar, where it is most evident that the body of the aforesaid S. Dunstan lies honourably buried. This small chest we caused to be opened with due reverence; our beloved brother, the present prior of our said church, and some of his fellow-monks, together with the public notaries, men of probity and discretion and many other credible persons (forty in number) then and there, at our order, standing by, and plainly seeing all that was going on. On its being opened, we found within it a certain leaden cist, and, underneath, inside a single small piece of lead a foot long, on which was engraved, "Hic requiescit

* Dart. Hist. Cant. Cath.

Sanctus Dunstanus, Archiepiscopus." Then within the same cist were found pieces of linen, very white, redolent, as it were, with the odour of balsam; these being unrolled, we discovered the skull of the said saint, entire, and the different bones of his body, with many other similar relics. By other probable testimonies, also, it is plainly apparent that the aforesaid venerable body of S. Dunstan ought not to be resting in any other place than in our church aforesaid. Wherefore we very much wonder that you are possessed with such blindness, rashness, or boldness, as not to be afraid to assert, that you have the aforesaid body buried with you; whence arises the greatest scandal to the Church of God, and the people of this realm are led into no small error, superstition, and confusion. Nor, indeed, can it possibly be, without some mistake, that the body of one saint should be believed to be in different places; or that one body instead of the other ought to be considered (the true) and adored. Wherefore it is greatly to be feared, lest God himself may be grievously offended at this, and you yourselves greatly deceived. That so great a disgrace and abuse, then, may not gradually proceed to still worse evil (if it be longer permitted), and that the truth of the matter may become more evident, we earnestly exhort your Fraternity, as well as beg and require you, to come to us, at the next feast of the translation of the holy Thomas the Martyr, bringing with you any writings or records favouring your pretended title, in this respect, which you may happen to have. Nor will it be unadvised in your fraternity, since the aforesaid matter has been one of no small weight and importance, to come to us (if convenient) in your own person; but if not, to take care diligently to send to us, at the time before-mentioned, some persons both prudent themselves and fully instructed in your sentiments on this matter. Nor will you act imprudently if you no more suffer the remains of the aforesaid S. Dunstan, which you pretend to have in your monastery, to be disclosed, or venerated by the people in any way, for unless this should be the case, a greater tumult, scandal, and error will thence ensue.

"At Lambeth, 4 June,

"In the year of our Pontificate the 5th."

The answer is also preserved: —

CHAP. VII.

Dunstan.

Richard Beere, Abbot of Glastonbury, to William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury.

"Most reverend Father in Christ, after most humble commendation.—I have with due reverence received the letter of your fatherly care, in which it was stated, that you hear that we have publicly erected in our church a certain tomb of the holy Dunstan, and thence pretend that we have his body buried with us. I most humbly reply, that with the power and authority of the bishop of the diocese, we have removed from one place to another a certain tomb of the aforesaid saint our patron, and distinguished benefactor; which was erected in our church, by the religious fathers, our predecessors, more than 200 years ago, and most beautifully adorned with gold and silver: and this we have done, from no other cause than the glory of God, the honour of his saint, and the greater embellishment of our monastery; it may be added that among those who flocked to the place, where it formerly stood, for the veneration of the holy Pantaleon and other saints, for which purpose the place is frequently visited, there have been sometimes even found persons who stole little pieces of gold and silver from his shrine, which could be touched by the hand. That it might be the safer therefore from such pilferers, we have placed it in a somewhat higher position. We do not allege that his body was buried with us, but that his sacred bones were brought and conveyed to us, after the destruction of your church at Canterbury by the Danes. But as regards the argument of your most Reverend Paternity, that you lately made a most diligent search, as to whether the body of the said saint still remained buried in the church of Canterbury or no, and found in a leaden cist, a little piece of lead engraved with these letters, viz.: 'Hic requiescit Sanctus Dunstanus, Archiepiscopus;' And that on the things being unrolled the skull of S. Dunstan appeared entire, with many of the bones of his body, and from these arguments your most reverend fatherly care is moved with wonder that we the persons aforesaid should be possessed with such blindness or audacity, as not to be afraid to affirm that the body is buried with us: Most Reverend Father, it might be that whilst the greatest portion of his remains have been conveyed to us, some have been left there, either at the request of our brethren of Canterbury, who, after a course of

time, restored them to their monastery, or may have been transmitted for the contemplation of some archbishop. For since the holy Dunstan, five members of our monastery, at Glastonbury, have been promoted to the archiepiscopate. Which I conjecture the more readily, inasmuch as we have his principal bones, but our beloved brethren of Canterbury only certain particles, so far as may be collected either from the letter of your most reverend fatherly care, or from the public documents: we possess the posterior and upper portion of the scull, they, the forehead or anterior portion. Which, if it be true, I extremely rejoice at; that immortal God is willing that his beloved saint should be honoured in different places, as others are honoured, without scandal or any tumult of the populace. But forasmuch a your most reverend fatherly care, at the end of your letter, exhorts us to prohibit the remains of God's saint either to be disclosed or venerated by the people, if we were willing to yield to this wish, with the pardon of your most reverend fatherly care, and that of our most beloved brethren be it said, we should not be so much blind and audacious, as absolutely wicked and blasphemous. For who is so rash as not to fear, lest God should be grievously offended, if a mortal should prohibit an immortal, or a frail sinner in this militant state should desecrate the insignia of one who is triumphant. Moreover, if such should be the case, the greatest scandal, tumult and danger also would ensue, which in the letter of your most reverend fatherly care is most kindly set before us as a thing to be dreaded. For whoever being present should see a concourse of people in constant attendance, stripped of their garments, barefoot, and making daily supplications, would doubtless say to us, as, we read in the fifth of Acts, Gamaliel said: 'Let them alone, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.' Indeed, carefully considering both the devotion of the people and the promise of omnipotent God, who is perpetually glorified in His saints, I by no means dare to attempt anything which may be derogatory to His saint, but tremble within me even to think of any such thing, especially when not only ancient chronicles, but even common rumours repeat, that his sacred bones are truly and indubitably with us. Wherefore, when certain parishioners near us, who, every year on the festival of our most blessed patron S. Dunstan (which is generally acknowledged) taking a

CHAP. VII. Dunstan.

holiday from their domestic labours, come to our church at Glastonbury, both men and women, masters and servants, according to ancient custom, with the utmost veneration, some of the eldest of these being asked by the public notaries, in the presence of others, what was the religious feeling which induced them to do so; they answered that they had learned from their ancestors that their grandsires formerly conveyed the bones of S. Dunstan, through their confines from Canterbury to Glastonbury, that in the same way they had followed them with devotion to our church at Glastonbury, and therefore the parishioners were not only accustomed (to this very day) to observe a festival on that day in commemoration of the event, but also to come to our church at Glastonbury to pay their devotions. For if any one had refused to do so, or through attention to his own affairs, had omitted to discontinue his labours on that day, that year nothing went well with him, but some heavy loss or misfortune occurred to his cattle or property: which had very often happened in the times of those still living. Therefore our beloved brethren of Canterbury (saving the judgment of your most Reverend Paternity) might with less scandal conceal their newly discovered relics, until either a comparison with our relics having been made, whereby if they are really his remains, they would undoubtedly agree with one another, or by the information of ancient books all doubt and scruple being removed, men may understand that the remains which the people of Canterbury assert that they possess, are the true relics of the same saint, who, for so many years amongst us has been had in the greatest veneration by the whole people. I have written this the more explicitly because, being somewhat indisposed, I am unable at this time to come myself to your most Reverend Fatherly care (as I wish and ought). Wherefore I earnestly beseech and entreat you that the bad state of my health may be a sufficient excuse, and will readily execute all your commands, as far as may be without prejudice to my church or the rights of the monastery, or the offence of God and the greatest of His saints.*

"Written at Glastonbury on the 4th of the calends of July."

* Ang. Sac. ii. 229—231.

ETHELGAR.*

Ethelgar was educated at Glastonbury, where, under the fostering care of Dunstan, the monastery had already become the great public school of England for the education of the higher classes of society. That he distinguished himself by the strictness of his moral conduct, and by his intellectual acquirements, is proved by his being appointed a brother in the monastery of Abingdon, by the conscientious but severe Ethelwold, when that prelate was searching for proper persons to be associated with him in establishing the Benedictine system. The ancient monastery which had existed at Abingdon from time immemorial, had been destroyed by the Danes, and it had been restored and re-endowed by Ethelwold, assisted by King Edred and his mother Elgiva. The founder had a right to impose upon the inmates of his new institution any rules and regulations which might commend themselves to his judgment. Ethelwold established the Benedictine rule, and availed himself of the assistance of a young man like Ethelgar, who had been habituated to its discipline from his earliest years, and under the superintendence of Dunstan himself. We may in some measure judge of the character of a favourite pupil from that of his master; and we read with pleasure that, however zealous Ethelwold might be for the splendour of religion, he was still more anxious to relieve the poor. In the time of a great famine, he sold all the plate of the church that he might purchase food to relieve their distress;

* Authorities: — Florence of Worcester; William of Malmesbury; Roger of Hoveden; Godwin.

Aliases:—Æthelgarus, Wigorn., Westmon.; Etelgarus, Chron. Mailr.; Adelgardus, Huntingd., Chron. Petrob.; Stilgarus, Brompt.

CHAP. VII.

Ethelgar. 964.

justly observing that the church, if reduced to poverty, might be again enriched, but if the poor were starved, it was not in the power of man to restore them to life.

In the year 964, according to the Chronicle, Ethelgar was appointed Abbot of Newminster at Winchester; and there, with reference to the conduct of Ethelwold, who in 963 had been consecrated Bishop of Winchester, he was forcibly reminded of the apostolic warning that, although we give all our goods to feed the poor, we may be without charity. Ethelwold gave proof that, if he relieved the poor, it was from a sense of duty, but that his heart was steeled by party feeling against the cries of pity. On his arrival at Winchester he found the cathedral served by married secular clergy *, and he determined at once to separate them from their wives, or to reduce them to penury. His mode of acting was heartless. He ordered a certain number of cowls to be made, brought them into the choir, summoned the canons, and after addressing to them a discourse which some writers have called pathetic, he left it to their choice either to be cucullated at once, and to embrace the monastic state, or else to quit the service of the cathedral. It is satisfactory to know that only three were base enough to renounce the marriage vow, and that the rest remembered who it is that hath said, "Those whom God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." The stalls in the choir were now filled with monks from Abingdon, and Winchester cathedral remained in the hands of the religious till the Reformation.

The bishop then directed his attention to what was at that time called Newminster, subsequently Hyde Abbey. To this institution we have had occasion to refer in the life of Plegmund, as the burial-place of Alfred and the

* Monasticon Angl. i. 194.

cemetery of the West Saxon kings. It was founded by Alfred, and completed by his son Edward, through whose munificence it was nobly endowed. It was remarkable for the peculiarity of its situation. The Niwan Mynstre occupied the whole of the north side of what is now the churchyard. It was thus placed within a stone's throw of the cathedral, or Ealdan Mynstre as it was called by way of distinction, and appeared to stand as its rival, in magnificence and dignity. We may presume that this arrangement was the result of accidental circumstances. Alfred designed a royal cemetery with a school attached to it, and sought for it a site, as far from the walls and as near to the centre of the city as possible. To remove the public buildings as far as possible from the reach of the missiles of hostile combatants, was a customary precaution. The filial piety of Edward, however, enlarged the plan of Alfred, and so anxious was he to secure the site on which to erect his magnificent minster, that he actually paid the astonishing sum of a mark of gold for every foot of land that he purchased.* This minster had never been served by monks, but had always been in the possession of the secular clergy, many of them illustrious for their birth and merit, and some of them married. For sixty years the establishment had continued in the hands of the secular clergy, who conducted the education of the young nobility on the system laid down by the celebrated Grimbald. But Ethelwold pursued the same course against the seculars, which Henry VIII. imitated in his proceedings against the monks themselves, at a later period. Discovering some irregularities of conduct, he exaggerated them in his representations to the public, and dismissed certain of the canons on the ground of their non-residence. It was a popular act to bestow their prebends upon the

* Monasticon Angl. ii. 427.

CHAP. VI. Plegmund. 903.

secular clergy. It became a school for the education of the higher classes, and over it Grimbald presided.* It was at the consecration of this building that the two friends met for the last time.†

Two aged men they were, the literary advisers of one who is now known as Alfred the Great, but at that time was more affectionately described as "England's darling." Fable has dabbled with the fame of Alfred, but not, as in the case of King Arthur and other heroes, to the annihilation of his historical existence. In Alfred's case, the myth can, without much difficulty, be separated from the fable, and when the chaff has been scattered to the winds, there is still a solid residuum of truth. His great merit was that of common sense directing an inflexible integrity of purpose. We admit that the British constitution was not created by Alfred; it is a goodly tree, the roots of which are lost in the depths of a far remoter antiquity, and can be traced into pre-historic times. He did not divide the country, as it has been fabulously asserted, into shires, hundreds, and tythings; these formed part of the system which the Saxons brought with them from the continent; but he infused into the institutions which he found established a vigour and a life which they had not formerly possessed; and he first compacted into system the different laws of the Heptarchy, tolerating a diversity of customs, but endeavouring to bring all under one principle, and basing that principle on religion.

His sternness in punishing the injustice and ignorance of those who accepted offices of trust, the duties of which they were unwilling or unable to perform, and the success with which he prevented the few who were

* This building was afterwards removed to Hyde Meadow, and became Hyde Abbey.

† Chron. Sax. 903. Monasticon Anglicanum, ii. 427.

becoming an aristocracy, from converting their bocland or estates into independent principalities, have given rise to stories of his extreme severity; but it ought not to be forgotten by those who accuse him of stretching the royal prerogative beyond its proper limits, that he was emphatically the friend of the people, whose rights he was vindicating, when he repressed the rising power of a tyrannical oligarchy, when he deposed the ignorant among his judges, and when he punished the unjust.* He himself gives us his principle of action, when, in concluding the introductory chapter of his laws, he declares that "he had collected together and put into writing many of those things which his ancestors had observed, and which he approved; and with the advice of his witan had neglected many of those which he did not approve;" adding that "he had not dared to attempt to commit to writing any of his own, for it was unknown to him what might be satisfactory to them who should succeed him; but that whatever he could find in the days of Ina, Offa, or Ethelbert, which appeared to him just he had adopted, and the rest he neglected."† In short he, as a great reformer, introduced that principle of reform, which, whether in what relates to religion or to civil affairs, has always formed the character of the English mind — the principle, which is exhibited in a determination to render our institutions as perfect as possible in their administration, without reference to theoretical anomalies, — the principle, which perplexes foreigners, while it excites their admiration, for to them our Reformers appear in the light of Conservatives, and our Conservatives appear to be Reformers, — the principle, which unites us in general action, although in the agents the ardour of reform and the circumspection of conservatism are mixed in different proportions.

* Lappenberg, ii. 66. Asser, 497.

† Ancient Laws, p. 26.

CHAP. VII.

Siric. 989.

there being no chapter of clerks; and, in the eleventh century, having first been united to Sherborn, the bishop's see was finally removed to Salisbury.*

Siric was a very unworthy successor of Dunstan in the gemot, and though he proffered his advice to the crown, a worse adviser Ethelred could scarcely have had. Dunstan was the advocate of pacific measures, but he preserved peace by always keeping the country prepared for war. The country under Dunstan, was as a giant taking rest, but as a giant armed and ever ready for action. To the advice of Siric, is attributed the fatal policy which, for a season, terminated in the overthrow of the dynasty of Cerdic, and has involved the name and character of Ethelred in deserved disgrace. After the defeat at Maldon, and the panic which it occasioned, the archbishop, in conjunction with the ealdormen Ethelward and Alfric, counselled the king to purchase peace for the sum of ten
991. thousand pounds.† This was the foundation of the Danegelt, a tax which soon became annual, to provide an ineffectual bribe to the Danes,—a bribe intended to induce them to keep the peace, but which only encouraged them and enabled them to become more frequent and powerful in their invasions or attacks. The sums of money mentioned in the Chronicle as paid to the Danes, are fabulously great, but I believe that there is little or no difference in the MSS. as to the statements made upon the subject. That this island in many of its districts, in Cornwall and Devonshire, as well as in some parts of Wales, and the south of Scotland, was auriferous, and that it was visited by the Romans with the same object as that which has taken so many of our countrymen of late years to Australia and California, are well known facts; and we may be permitted to suppose that the

* Tanner, Notitia Wilts. xxix. † Chron. Sax. 991; Flor. Wig. 991.

quantity found was greater, and the nuggets larger than is generally imagined.*

Siric. 991.

Siric, soon after his translation, proceeded to Rome. John XV. was Pope. The iniquity of the Popes and of the Church of Rome in general, was fast coming to a climax, and Europe was beginning to feel that it could not be much longer endured. At the very time when Siric was passing through France, there was a council held at the convent of St. Basolus, in the vicinity of Rheims, in which the pretensions of the Roman See, on the authority of the forged decretals, were rejected, and the Popes denounced as monsters of iniquity, for their vice, their licentiousness, their bloodthirstiness, and their avarice, which last-mentioned vice was the speciality of the reigning pontiff. The description given by Baronius is not exaggerated, when he describes them as a succession of "homines monstruosi, vita turpissimi, moribus perditissimi, usquequaque fœdissimi." †

Siric, on his arrival in Rome, lodged at the school of the English, and on the second day he lunched with the Pope. The energy of the archbishop, though he was advanced in years, was considerable, for we are told that he visited more than twenty churches in two days. In his journey back to his native land he was less expeditious, as we find him making seventy-nine stages between Rome and Sumeran, which was possibly either at the mouth of the Somme, or somewhere about Calais.‡

* See Murchison's Siluria. "England, by its exuberance of corn may be called the garden of Ceres, from its quantity of gold a treasury of Arabia."—*William of Poictiers*, p. 218.

† Annal. 879, 4; 900, 1—3; 908, 7; 912, 9—11.

‡ These details are gathered from a MS. in the Cotton library, Tiberius, B. 5, which has, I believe, never yet been published. It comes at the end of a list of English bishops, one of those collated for the "Monumenta." The first article is a list of Popes down to John XV., whom it describes as having sat four years, a month and a half,

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Siric. 990.

Siric was a learned man, and a patron of learning, he collected a valuable library, which he left by will to the cathedral.* When the homilies of Elfric the Grammarian were collected, he gave to them the full weight of his sanction, and desired them to be read in all the churches

meaning probably four years and a half and a month. And as John XV. begins in August, 985, this brings the date to about February or March, 990, about which time Siric, who was elected archbishop in the December of 989, may have reached Rome. I give the article entire as it has never been printed, omitting the list of the Popes: —

"Adventus Archiepiscopi Nostri Sigerici ad Romam—primitus ad limitem Beati Petri Apostoli. Deinde ad Sanctam Mariam Scolam Anglorum—ad Sanctum Laurentium in Craticula—ad Sanctum Valentinum in ponte Molui—ad Sanctam Agnes—ad Sanctum Laurentium foris murum—ad Sanctum Sebastianum—ad Sanctum Anastasium—ad S. Paulum—ad S. Bonifacium—ad S. Savinam—ad S. Mariam Scolam Grecam—ad S. Ceciliam—ad S. Chrysogonum—ad S. Mariam transtyberi—ad S. Pancratium—Deinde reversi sumus in domum. Mane ad S. Maria Secunda—ad Sanctos Apostolos—ad Scs Johannes in Laterane —Inde refecimus cum domino Apostolico Johe. Deinde ad Jer'lm—ad S. Mariam Majorem—ad S. Petrum ad vincula—ad S. Laurentium ubi corpus ejus assatus fuit.

"Istæ sunt submansiones de Roma usque ad mare. 1, Urbs Roma; 2, Johis VIIII.; 3, Bacane; 4, Suteria; 5, Furcari; 6, Sce. Valentine; 7, Sce. Flaviane; 8, S. Cristina; 9, Aquapendente; 10, S. Petir in pail; 11, Abricula; 12, Sce. Quiric; 13, Turreiner; 14, Arbia; 15, Seocine; 16, Burgenove; 17, Ælse; 18, Sc. Martin in Fosse; 19, Sce. Gemiane; 20, Sce. Maria Glan; 21, Sce. Petre Currant; 22, Sce. Dionysii; 23, Arneblanca; 24, Aqua Nigra; 25, Forcri; 26, Luca; 27, Campmajor; 28, Luna; 29, Sce. Stephane; 30 Aquilla; 31, Punremel; 32, Sce. Benedicte; 33, Sce. Moderanne; 34, Philemangenur; 35, Metane; 36, Sce. Domnine; 37, Floricum; 38, Placentia; 39, Sce. Andrea; 40, Sce. Cristine; 41, Pamphica; 42, Tremel; 43, Vercel; 44, Sce. Agatha; 45, Eueri; 46, Publei; 47, Agust; 48, Sce. Remei; 49, Petrescastel; 50, Ursiores; 51, Sce. Maurici; 52, Burbulei; 53, Vivæc; 54, Losanna; 55, Urba; 56, Antifern; 57, Punterlin; 58, Nos; 59, Bysiceon; 60, Cuscei; 61, Sefui; 62, Grenant; 63, Oisma; 64, Blæcvile; 65, Bar; 66, Breone; 67, Domaniant; 68, Funtaine; 69, Catheluns; 70, Rems; 71, Corbunei; 72, Mundlothuin; 73, Martinwaeth; 74, Dilin; 75, Atherats; 76, Bruwæi; 77, Teranburh; 78, Gisne; 79, Sumeran."

* Gervas, 1648.

of the land. They became to the Church of England, in the Anglo-Saxon times, very much what the homilies published at the Reformation have continued to be at the present time. No one was pledged to adopt all the sentiments and opinions advanced or expressed, but all agreed that they contained a godly and wholesome doctrine, necessary for the times.

We cannot here pass over the question, who was Elfric, the author of the homilies thus highly esteemed in the Church of England? It is truly stated by the learned translator of the homilies, that the real question lies between Elfric, archbishop of Canterbury, and Elfric, archbishop of York. And if this point be conceded, the question is settled at once by internal evidence. Elfric, archbishop of York, was an arrogant worldly man, who gave full play to all those malignant passions which the circumstances of the times were calculated to excite in an ill-regulated mind. At his instigation, according to William of Malmesbury, Hardicanute caused the corpse of his brother Harold to be taken from the ground, decapitated, and afterwards thrown into the Thames.* It is also stated that being exasperated against the people of Worcester, who rejected him for their bishop, he again instigated the king to burn their city, and confiscate their property, under pretext of their having resisted the royal tax-gatherers. It is morally impossible that a man of whom such things could be believed, should have written a long series of homilies, which, whatever be their merits or their demerits, are replete with sentiments of Christian charity, and are pervaded by a meek and humble spirit. In the preface to the homilies which were dedicated to Siric, probably in 990 or 991, Elfric describes himself simply as a monk, and so he is described in the instrument of election, given in Harpsfield †, which is in all probability a

* De Gestis Pontif. Ang. lib. iii.

† Hist. Eccl. p. 198.

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spurious document. And this is supposed to be inconsistent with the admitted fact, that Elfric of Canterbury, was the successor of Siric in the see of Ramsbury. It is true that Elfric succeeded Siric in the see of Ramsbury, but there are very good reasons for supposing that between the translation of the one bishop, and the election of the other, a considerable period intervened. The entry in the "Saxon Chronicle" for the year 990, is simply as follows:—"This year Siric was consecrated archbishop, and afterwards went to Rome for his pall." There is nothing said of the appointment of his successor, and, as the archbishop sought the pall, it is so probable as to be almost certain, that he would delay any consecration to a vacant see until his return. There is, on the other hand, another document, which would induce us to conclude that the consecration did not take place till the year 993, or probably not till 994, the last year of Archbishop Siric's life. On referring to the "Registrum Sacrum Anglicanum," we find that the earliest authentic signature of Elfric, as simple bishop, is made in the year 994. Siric himself was consecrated in 985, and his first signature occurs in the same year; his predecessor, Wulfgar, was consecrated in 981, and his first signature is in the year following; when Elfric was translated to Canterbury, his first signature occurs in the year of his appointment, but although the see was vacant in 990, the first signature of Elfric was in 994. The diocese of Ramsbury was very imperfectly organised, and was evidently regarded as one of the minor sees, such as might be intrusted to Odo, while yet a warrior.*

* Florence of Worcester, under the year 992, mentions Ælfgar, or Ælfstan, as bishop of Wiltshire. The name does not occur in the Registrum of Stubbs, but it shows that he was ignorant that the see was then filled, and this would be very remarkable if the occupant were so great a man as Elfric the Grammarian. The biographical difficulties to be en-

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It is not at all improbable that owing to the dedication of the homilies, Elfric was preferred to Ramsbury, and being still a monk proud of his connection with Abingdon, he may have in modesty, sometimes used the humbler title which was ever congenial to his feelings. The dedication of the homilies to Siric is here given from Mr. Thorpe's translation: —

"In the name of the Lord, I, Elfric, a scholar of the benevolent and venerable prelate Ethelwold, send greeting to our master in the Lord, Archbishop Siric.—With perhaps somewhat of a rashness and presumption we have translated this work from the books of the Latins, in accordance with Holy Scripture, into our ordinary conversational language, for the edification of the unlearned who are acquainted with this tongue only, either in reading or writing; we have, therefore not used obscure words, but plain English, so that it may the more easily be able to come to the heart of those who read or hear it, to their soul's benefit, since they cannot be instructed in any other tongue than that in which they were born. Nor have we everywhere translated, word for word, but sense for sense, guarding, however, most carefully against deceptive errors, so as not to be found to have been led astray by any heresy, or deluded by any fallacy. In this exposition we have followed these authors, viz. Augustine of Hippo, Jerome, Bede, Gregory, Smaragdus, and occasionally Haymo; indeed, the authority of these is most

countered by those who take the opposite view of the subject, and the inconsistencies and contradictions in which they are involved, are pointed out by Wright, i. 480, and seem to be insuperable. Leland is obliged to separate one Elfric into three, while Bale gives to each of the imaginary persons a separate chapter. Usher joins the three into one, confounding Elfric of Canterbury, Elfric of York, and Elfric of Malmesbury. The ancient opinion, which identifies Elfric the Grammarian with Elfric the Primate was ably supported by Edward Rowe Mores, a learned Saxonist of Oxford in the last century, and his treatise was published after his death by an eminent Danish antiquary Thorkelin, with a commendatory preface. There is an allusion in the homilies to Ethelred's reign as past, but at the same time Siric is addressed as then living. Every one knows the liberties taken by transcribers.

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freely acknowledged by all Catholics. In this little book we have not only given expositions of the Gospels, but also of the passions or lives of the saints, for the benefit of the common people of this nation. We have in this book given forty discourses, thinking this sufficient for the faithful, throughout the year, if they be read through to them in the church by God's ministers. We have, indeed, in hand another book, shortly to be committed to writing, containing those treatises or passions which have been omitted in this; we do not, however, treat of all the Gospels throughout the year, but those only which we hope will be sufficient for the unlearned, to the benefit of their souls, since secular persons are not able to comprehend all points, although they may hear them from their teacher's mouth. In this translation we give two books, advising that one be read through in one year in God's Church, and the other in the year following, that it be not tedious to the auditors; we give permission, however, to any one, if he pleases, to arrange both in one book. If, then, any one is displeased with the translation that it is not always word for word, or because they have an exposition shorter than the treatises of the authors, or because we have not proceeded according to the order of the Church service, to treat of all the Gospels, let him compose a book for himself in a loftier style as may best suit his ideas. I beseech him, however, not to pervert our translation, which we hope, by God's grace, not to say it boastingly, we have been able, through diligent exertion, to render correctly. But I earnestly entreat your benignity, most benevolent father Siric, to deign to correct by your industry any blemishes of mischievous heresy, or misty errors which you may discover in our translation, and that this little work may be hence ascribed to your authority, and not be placed to the credit of our insignificance. Amen." *

994. Siric was fond of pomp and religious ceremonial, and his ruling passion was strong in death. He left minute directions as to the mode of celebrating his anniversary, and bequeathed to the chapter seven palls †, inherited pro-

* Preface to Elfric's Homilies. † Dart. 112.

bably from his predecessors, to serve as hangings to the church upon the occasion. He died in 994 after a brief pontificate of four years. CHAP. VII. Siric. 994

ELFRIC.*

Of Elfric mention has been already made in the life of Archbishop Siric. He was of an illustrious family. His father died while he was a child; and his mother married again. She had for her husband no less a personage than Eardwulf, earl of Kent, whose name appears among the benefactors of Canterbury in 940, the year assigned to the birth of Elfric.† Elfric. 995.

In his preface to the Book of Genesis, Elfric complains of the disadvantages to which he was exposed in early life, through the ignorance of his preceptor, a secular priest of Kent, of whom he asserts that he could but in part understand Latin, and was unable to explain the most ordinary Scripture difficulties. His contempt for his instructor prejudiced him against all the secular clergy, of whom he says, in a sweeping clause, that if they understood some little of Latin books they fancied that they were great scholars. He was thus prepared to become a Dunstanite, and was through life distinguished by a consistent, but not intolerant, zeal against the married clergy. He was admitted a monk of the abbey of Abingdon, and there he had for his master the celebrated

* Authorities:—Chron. Sax.; William of Malmesbury; Florence of Worcester; Roger of Hoveden; Henry of Huntingdon; "Edwardi Rowei Moresi de Elfrico, Dorobernensi Archiepiscopo, Commentarius," edidit Grimus Johannis Thorkelin, 4to., London, 1789; Wright, Biog. Brit. Lit.

Aliases:—Alfricus vel Aluricius, Hunt., Hoved., Wigorn., Chro. Mail.; Alvericus, Chron. Petrob.; Aelfricus, Malmes. Westm. Dunelm

† Mat. Paris, Abbots of St. Albans, p. 42; Cod. Dipl. 1530.

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Ethelwold. Of Ethelwold it is said "that it was the delight of his life to teach young men and boys growing up to man's estate; to give them rules for grammar and metre, and by pleasant conversation to draw them on to better things;" but though a popular master we may doubt whether he was a good one, for one of his practices was "to turn Latin books for them into English." We have heard of the use of "cribs" but this is perhaps the only instance of their being provided by the master.

The unjustifiable proceedings of Ethelwold, when he was consecrated to the see of Winchester, have been mentioned in the life of Ethelgar; these proceedings caused vacancies in the prebendal stalls, both of the old minster and the new, which the bishop filled by an importation of monks from Abingdon. Elfric, being one of the persons thus preferred by his former preceptor, made Winchester his residence, where, as a teacher, he became more distinguished than Ethelwold himself. Here his earliest work appeared, a glossary of Latin and Saxon words, which was, for a long period, the dictionary chiefly used in the English schools. This was succeeded by his grammar, a Saxon version of Donatus and Priscian, from which he derived his title of Grammaticus. His amusing colloquies followed, the object of which was to familiarise the young English scholar with the use of Latin in ordinary conversation.

In 987 Ethelmer, earl of Devon and Cornwall, having founded the monastery of Cerne Abbot in Dorsetshire, applied to the Bishop of Winchester to send him a monk from his cathedral, to instruct the new society in the Benedictine rule, and Elfric was chosen. Here he resided probably for some time, but it was not his permanent abode.

Elfric was endowed with a facility of composition very rare at that time; and, as he possessed the pen of a ready

writer, application was frequently made to him for assistance. His patrons, such as Ethelmer and his son, the Ealdorman Ethelward, thought they might command his services, and suggest the publication of works which they imagined would be useful to themselves or others. Elfric was at last wearied of the importunities of his friends; and in his preface to the Book of Genesis, addressing the Ealdorman Ethelward, he says: "I say now that I neither dare nor will translate any book, after this one, out of the Latin into the English; and I pray thee, dear Ealdorman, that thou require it of me no more, lest I be disobedient to thee, or a liar if I obey."

He was wearied of translation, and found pleasure in original composition. The dedication prefixed to his two books of homilies has been given in the life of Archbishop Siric. We have seen how, through the archbishop, they became authoritative, during the Anglo-Saxon period, in the Church of England. Out of these homilies controversialists have sought to make theological capital; but as no one of any section of the Church would, in these days, think of remodelling his opinions according to the doctrines of the tenth century, the investigation which has been the consequence, is of more interest to the antiquary and the historian than to the divine. The Paschal homily has been often quoted for the clear and explicit manner in which it makes known to us the doctrine of the Church of England in this age with reference to the Eucharist. The following passage affords a fair specimen of Elfric's style: —

"Now certain men have often inquired, and yet frequently inquire, how the bread, which is prepared from corn, and baked by the heat of fire, can be changed to Christ's body; or the wine, which is wrung from many berries, can by any blessing be changed to the Lord's blood? Now we say to such men, that some things are said of Christ typically, some literally. It

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is a true and certain thing that Christ was born of a maiden, and of His own will suffered death, and was buried, and on this day arose from death. He is called bread typically, and lamb, and lion, and whatever else. He is called bread, because He is the life of us and of angels; He is called a lamb for his innocence; a lion for the strength wherewith he overcame the strong devil. But yet, according to true nature, Christ is neither bread, nor a lamb, nor a lion. Why then is the holy housel called Christ's body or His blood, if it is not truly that which it is called? But the bread and the wine, which are hallowed through the mass of the priests, appear one thing to human understandings without, and cry another thing to believing minds within. Without, they appear bread and wine, both in aspect and in taste; but they are truly, after the hallowing, Christ's body and His blood, through a ghostly mystery. A heathen child is baptized, but it varies not its aspect without, although it be changed within. It is brought to the font vessel sinful through Adam's transgression, but it will be washed from all sins within, though it without change not its aspect. In like manner the holy font-water, which is called the well-spring of life, is in appearance like other waters, and is subject to corruption; but the might of the Holy Ghost approaches the corruptible water through the blessing of the priests, and it can afterwards wash body and soul from all sins through ghostly might. Lo, now we see two things in this one creature. According to true nature the water is a corruptible fluid, and according to a ghostly mystery has salutary power; in like manner, if we behold the holy housel in a bodily sense, then we see that it is a corrupt and changeable creature; but if we distinguish the ghostly might therein, then understand we that there is life in it, and that it gives immortality to those who partake of it with belief. Great is the difference between the invisible might of the holy housel and the visible appearance of its own nature. By nature it is corruptible bread and corruptible wine, and is by power of the divine word truly Christ's body and His blood; not however bodily, but spiritually. Great is the difference between the body in which Christ suffered, and the body which is hallowed for housel. The body verily in which Christ suffered was born of Mary's flesh, with

blood and with bones, with skin and with sinews, with human limbs, quickened by a rational soul; and His ghostly body, which we call housel, is gathered of many corns, without blood and bone, limbless and soulless, and there is, therefore, nothing therein to be understood bodily, but all is to be understood spiritually. Whatsoever there is in the housel which gives us the substance of life, that is from its ghostly power and invisible efficacy; therefore is the holy housel called a mystery, because one thing is seen therein, and another thing understood. That which is there seen has a bodily appearance; and that which we understand therein has ghostly might. Verily Christ's body which suffered death, and from death arose, will henceforth never die, but is eternal and impassible. The housel is temporary, not eternal; corruptible, and is distributed piecemeal; chewed betwixt teeth, and sent into the belly; but it is, nevertheless, by ghostly might, in every part all. Many receive the holy body, and it is, nevertheless, in every part all, by a ghostly miracle. Though to one man a less part be allotted, yet is there no more power in the great part than in the less; because it is in every man whole, by the invisible might.

"This mystery is a pledge and a symbol; Christ's body is truth. This pledge we hold mystically, until we come to the truth, and then will this pledge be ended. But it is, as we before said, Christ's body and His blood, not bodily, but spiritually. Ye are not to inquire how it is done, but to hold in your belief that it is so done." *

In the homily for St. Peter's day, Elfric distinctly refers our Lord's address, Matt. xvi. 18, not personally to St.

* Elfric's Homilies, translated by Thorpe, ii. 269–273. We may, perhaps, in all this see the remaining influence of Theodorus; for in the Eastern Church, though a change was unquestionably acknowledged after the consecration of the bread and wine, it was held to be of a mystical and sacramental nature, conformably to the teaching of her great doctors, Basil, Chrysostom, and Theodoret. Leavened bread continued to be used in the East; equivalents to the term transubstantiation were unknown; nor did the adoration of the blessed sacrament ever obtain in the Greek Church. See Foulkes' Manual, p. 315.

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Peter, but relatively to the declaration of his faith; and he limits the latter and more important clause, "upon this Rock," to our Lord himself, as the basis of the Christian Church.

On the other hand, we gather from his writings, that the superstitious veneration for relics had greatly increased; and there are obscure allusions to a doctrine of purgatory (which Bede pronounced to be only not incredible), for the cleansing, after death, of less perfect souls; there are appeals also, though by no means frequent, to the intercession of saints. The doctrinal allusions are, however, not many, neither are they introduced in a controversial spirit, for indeed this was anything but a controversial age. It was an age of war, when every man's hand was against his brother; and it is pleasant to hear amid the din of arms, the milder tones of the Church persuading to "peace and love," and exhorting her members "to console the widow and the orphan;" to "protect the stranger and the sojourner, and to cherish and feed" those whom she emphatically termed the poor of God.

It is probable that the homilies of Elfric were written from time to time at the request of different clergymen: being well known, they were collected and published with the confirmation of Siric, archbishop of Canterbury. He was evidently surprised when he received from a Bishop Wulfius *, or Wulfsy, a request to compose for him what we should in these days call an episcopal charge. Elfric's answer was:—

"Elfric, an humble brother, to the venerable Bishop Wulfius, health in the Lord.—We have readily obeyed your command, but have not presumed to write anything concerning the epis-

* I cannot find a bishop of this name, but there was a Wulfsy who was consecrated Bishop of Cornwall, before 967; and another of the same name who was probably the correspondent of Elfric, who was consecrated to the see of Sherborn, 992.

copal office; because it is your part to know how to be an example to all by your excellent behaviour, and by your continual admonitions to persuade your subjects to be saved, which things I speak in Christ Jesus, because ye ought often to confer with your clergy, and to reprove their negligence: for through their perverseness the canonical decrees and the doctrine of the Church are in effect abolished; therefore deliver your own soul, and inform them what they are to observe, as they are priests and ministers of Christ, lest you perish with them if you become a dumb dog. We write the following part of the epistle in English, and in such a manner as if you yourself dictated it with your own mouth and said to your subjects of the clergy."

The address does not commence in a very courteous style, and is rather abrupt: —

"I tell you priests, that I will not bear your neglects of your ministry. And I tell you in good sooth how the matter stands with priests. Christ established Christianity and chastity, and all who went His way forsook every worldly thing, and the company of their wives, and therefore He himself saith in His Gospel, 'He that hateth not his wife is not a minister worthy of Me.'"

After this exordium he briefly refers to the history of the Church, from its institution by our Lord until the council of Nice, at which synod, he says, the liturgy of the Church was established, the Nicene Creed drawn up, and other things ordained concerning the worship and service of God, and concludes with the bold assertion that it was decreed, that no clergyman should retain any woman in his house, except mother or sister, or aunt by father or mother. Then he breaks out again: —

"This seems strange for you to hear; for ye have so brought your wretched doings into fashion, as if there were no danger in a priest's living like a married man. Now ye say, ye cannot be without the attendance of a woman; how, then, could those holy men dwell without a woman. And they have now the reward of their purity of heart in life eternal without end. The

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priests now reply that Peter had a wife: they say what is very true; for so he might under the old law, before he submitted to Christ; but he left his wife* and every worldly thing after he had submitted to Christ, who instituted chastity."

He gives an account of the various officers of the ecclesiastical establishment, and explains their duties: —

"There are seven orders appointed in the church: the first is ostiary, the second lector, the third exorcist, the fourth acolyth, the fifth subdeacon, the sixth deacon, the seventh presbyter. The ostiary is keeper of the church-doors who is to notify the time with the bells, and to unlock the church to believers, and to lock out the unbelievers. The lector is to read in God's church, and is ordained to publish God's word. The exorcist is, in plain English, he that with invocations adjures malignant spirits, that delight in vexing men, through the Almighty Name, to depart from them. He is called the acolyth who holds the candle or taper, at the divine ministration, when the Gospel is read, or the housel hallowed at the altar, not as if he were to drive away the obscure darkness, but to signify bliss by that light, to the honour of Christ, who is our light. Sub-deacon is plainly under-deacon, he that brings forth the vessels to the deacon, and humbly ministers under the deacon with the housel vessels at the holy altar. The deacon is he that ministers to the mass priest, and places the oblation on the altar, and reads the Gospel at the divine ministration; he may baptize children and housel the people. They ought to serve their Saviour in white albs, and preserve the heavenly life with purity, and let all be done as becometh that order. The priest that remains without a deacon, has the name not the attendance of a priest. Presbyter is the mass-priest, or elder, not that he is old otherwise than in wisdom. He halloweth God's housel as our Saviour commanded: he ought by preaching to instruct the people in their belief, and to give an example to Christians by the purity of his manners. There is no more between a

* This gratuitous assertion is plainly contradicted in Scripture, since it is clear from the New Testament that the wife of St. Peter accompanied her husband in his travels. 1 Cor. ix. 5.

bishop and priest, but that the bishop is appointed to ordain, and to bishop children, and to hallow churches, and to take care of God's rights, for they would be abundantly too many if every priest did this, he hath the same order, but the other is more honourable. There is no order appointed by ecclesiastical institution but these seven, as we now said; monkship and abbotship are of another sort, and are not to be reckoned in this number: let no man add any order (so miscalled) to these orders. The souls of the priests that keep themselves chaste are an holy oblation."

Having given directions as to the keeping of the service books, he orders, with respect to the vestment of the officiating minister: —

"Let it not be sordid, at least not to the sight; and his altar-cloths well made. Let his chalice likewise be made of pure wood, not subject to rottenness; and also the paten: and let the corporal be clean, so as befits Christ's ministration. A thing of this sort is not to be treated without great care: but he shall be ever honoured with God, who ministers to Him in wisdom and purity. The mass-priest, on Sundays and mass-days, shall speak the sense of the Gospel to the people in English, and of the Pater noster, and the creed, as oft as he can, for the inciting of the people to know their belief, and retaining their Christianity. Let the teacher take heed of what the prophet says, "they are dumb dogs and cannot bark." We ought to bark and preach to laymen, lest they should be lost through ignorance. Christ in His Gospel saith of unlearned teachers, "if the blind lead the blind they both fall into the ditch." The teacher is blind that hath no book-learning, and he misleads the laity through his ignorance. Thus are you to be aware of this, as your own duty (requires). The holy fathers have also decreed, that tithes be paid into God's Church, and that the priest go to them, and divide them into three (parts), one for the reparation of the church, a second to the poor, a third to God's servants who attend the church. They have also decreed, that mass be not celebrated in any house but what is hallowed, except in case of necessity, or if the man be sick. And if an unbaptized child be of a sudden brought to the mass-priest,

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that he baptize it with all possible expedition, lest it die a heathen. That no priest sell his ministrations for money, nor make demand of anything for baptism, or any other ministration; and let him not be like them whom Christ drove with a scourge out of the temple, because they wickedly trafficked in it. Let not the servants of God now perform their ministrations for money, but to the end that they may merit eternal glory thereby. Let no priest remove for gain from one minster to another; but ever continue in that to which he was ordained, so long as he lives. And let no priest sottishly drink to intemperance; nor force much drink on others: for he should be always in readiness, so as to have his wits, if a child be to be baptized, or a man to be houseled; and if nothing of this should happen, yet he ought not to be drunk; for our Lord hath forbid drunkenness to His ministers. Let no priest be a trader, or a covetous merchant; nor forget his relation to God, nor engage in secular controversies, nor wear arms, nor plead causes, nor drink at taverns, as secular men do, nor swear oaths, but always speak without falsity, with simplicity, as becomes the well-instructed servant of God."

Having referred to the decrees of the first four general councils, he concludes the charge as fiercely as he commenced it:—

"How dare ye now overlook all these decrees, when the monks observe the rule of one man, the holy Benedict, and live by his direction? And if they in any point break it, they afterwards make satisfaction according to their abbot's injunction, with all humility. Ye also have your rule if ye would read it. By it ye might see how the matter stands with you. But ye affect secular judicatures, and choose to be reeves, and abandon your churches, and these decrees with all. Yet we will inform you of these decrees, lest we perish together with you. Christians ought to frequent the church, but men ought not to prate or dispute there: because that is the house of prayer, hallowed to God for ghostly speech. Nor ought men to drink or eat intemperately in God's house; which is hallowed to this purpose, that the body of God may be there eaten with faith. Yet men often act so absurdly as to sit up by night, and drink to madness

within God's house, and to defile it with scandalous games and lewd discourses. But it were better for them that they were lying in their beds, than that they should do —— *Cætera desunt.*"

Thus far Sir H. Spelman. At this mark (†) in the last canon the C.C.C. MS. breaks off, and then goes on as follows:—

"Ye ought not to make merry over dead men, nor to hunt after a corpse, except ye are invited to it: when ye are invited, forbid the heathenish songs of laymen, and their obstreperous ejaculations. Do not yourselves eat or drink where the corpse lies, lest ye become imitators of the heathenish superstition which they there practise. Ye ought not to be gorgeously drest with rings: nor let your garment be made in too gorgeous nor yet in too sordid a manner; but let every one wear what belongs to his order; the priest that to which he was ordained: and let him not wear a monk's shroud, nor that which belongs to laymen, any more than a man wears the woman's attire. Christ saith of His ministers who diligently serve Him, that they shall always be with Him in bliss, where He Himself is, in life truly so called. To Him be glory for ever and ever, Amen." *

Having been consecrated to the see of Ramsbury, Elfric was almost immediately afterwards translated to Canterbury. The circumstances attending his translation and the leading events of his episcopate are quaintly narrated in the Saxon Chronicle under the year 995: —

"In this year appeared 'cometa,' the star, and Archbishop Sigeric died: and Elfric, bishop of Wiltshire, was chosen, on Easter Day, at Amesbury, by King Ægelred and by all his witan. This Elfric was a very wise man, so that there was no sager man in England. Then went Elfric to his archiepiscopal seat; and when he came thither he was received by those men in orders who were most unacceptable to him, that was, by clerks.

* Johnson, i. 389–403; Wilk. Conc. i. 250.

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And soon (he sent for) all the wisest men he anywhere knew of, and also the old men who were able to say the soothest how each thing had been in this land in the days of their elders; in addition to what himself had learned from books and from wise men. Him told the very old men, as well clergy as laity, that their elders had told them how it had been established by law, soon after St. Augustine came to this land. When Augustine had obtained the bishopric in the city, then was he archbishop over all King Aegelbert's kingdom, as it is related in Historia Anglorum . . . . make (a bishop's) see by the king's aid in . . . . was begun by the old Romans . . . . and to sprout forth. In that company the foremost were Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, Rufinianus. By these sent the blessed pope the pall, and therewith a letter, and instruction how he should consecrate bishops, and in which place in Britain he should seat them. And to the king (also) he sent letters and many worldly gifts of divers things. And the churches which they had got ready he commanded to be consecrated in the name of our Lord and Saviour Christ and St. Mary; and for himself there fix a dwelling-place, and for all his after-followers; and that he (should) place therein men of the same order that he had sent thither, and of which he himself was, and also that each . . . . monks who should fill the archiepiscopal seat at Canterbury, and that be ever observed by God's leave and blessing and by St. Peter's, and by all who came after him. When this embassy came again to King Aegelbert and to Augustine, they were very pleased with such instruction. And the archbishop then consecrated the minster in Christ's name and St. Mary's, (on) the day which is called the mass-day of the two martyrs, Primus et Felicianus, and there within placed monks as St. Gregory commanded: and they God's service continently performed; and from the same monks bishops were taken for each . . . . as thou mayest read in Historia Anglorum. Then was Archbishop Elfric very blithe, that he had so many witnesses (who) stood best at that time with the king. Still more the same witan who were with the archbishop said:—'Thus also we . . . . monks have continued at Christ-Church during Augustine's days, and during Laurentius', Mellitus', Justus', Honorius', Deusdedit's, Theodore's, Brihtwold's,

Tatwine's, Nothelm's, Cuthbert's, Bregwine's, Jaenbert's, Athelard's, Wulfred's, Feologild's. But the first year when Ceolnoth came to the archbishopric, there was such a mortality that there remained no more than five monks within Christ-Church. During all his time there was war and sorrow in this land, so that no man could think of anything else, but . . . . Now, God be thanked, it is in the king's power and thine, whether they may be longer there within, because they (might) never better be brought thereout than now may be done, if it is the king's will and thine. The archbishop then without any staying, with all these men, went anon to the king and showed him all, so as we here before have related. Then was the king very glad (at these) tidings, and said to the archbishop and to the others, 'It seemeth advisable to me that thou shouldst go first of all to Rome after thy (pall, and that) thou show to the pope all this, and, after that, act by his counsel.' And they all answered, that was the best counsel. When (the priests) heard this then resolved they that they should take two from among themselves and send to the pope, and they should offer him great gifts and silver, on condition that he should give them the arch (-pall). But when they came to Rome, then would not the pope do that, because they brought him no letter, either from the king or from the people, and commanded them to go, lo! where they would. (So soon as) the priests had gone thence, came Archbishop Elfric to Rome, and the pope received him with much worship, and commanded him on the morrow to perform mass at St. Peter's altar, and the pope himself put on him his own pall, and greatly honoured him. When this was done, the archbishop began telling the pope all about the clerks how it had happened, and how they were within the minster at his archbishopric. And the pope related to him again how the priests had come to him, and offered great gifts, in order that he should give them the pall. And the pope said, 'Go now to England again, with God's blessing, and St. Peter's and mine; and as thou comest home, place in thy minster men of that order which St. Gregorius commanded Augustine therein to place, by God's command, and St. Peter's and mine.' Then the archbishop with this returned to England. As soon as he came home, he entered his archiepiscopal seat, and after that

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went to the (king); and the king and all his people thanked God for his return, and that he so had succeeded as was pleasing to them all. He then went again to Canterbury, and drove the clerks out of the minster, and there within placed monks, all as the pope commanded him. A. D. 996. In this year was Elfric consecrated archbishop to Christ Church. This year was Wulstan ordained bishop of London. A. D. 997. In this year the army went about Devonshire into Severnmouth, and there ravaged, as well among the Cornish-men as among the North Welsh, and among the men of Devon; and then landed at Watchet, and there wrought much evil by burning and by manslaying. And after that they again went about Penwithstart, on the south side, and went then into the mouth of the Tamar, and then went up until they came to Lidford, and burned and destroyed everything which they met with; and they burned Ordulf's minster at Tavistock, and brought unspeakable booty with them to their ships. This year Archbishop Elfric went to Rome after his arch-pall." *

These statements are not made by a contemporary, and are coloured by the writer who was a monk. To have turned out the canons would have been contrary to the principles laid down by Elfric himself, and the times were so troublous that he was more likely to be called upon to adopt conciliatory measures than to provoke a still powerful party. But this portion of history is obscure. Elfric died on the 16th of November, 1006, and was buried at Abingdon. The following is his will: —

"Here is shown how Archbishop Elfric made his will. First, for his burial fee he bequeaths to Christ Church (Canterbury) the land at Well and at Bourne, and at Risborough. And he bequeaths his lord (the king), his best ship, and the sails and rigging thereto, and sixty helmets and sixty hauberks. And he wishes, if his lord grants his consent, to settle upon St. Alban's, the land at Kingsbury, and that he will take in exchange that at Adulfington. And he bequeaths the land at Dumbleton to

* Sax. Chron. ad ann. 995–997.

Abingdon, save that Elfnoth is to hold three hides thereof for his life, and afterwards all is to go to Abingdon: and he bequeaths him ten oxen and two men; and they (the men) are to follow him for their lord, who has the land in his possession. And he bequeaths the land at Wallingford, which he bought to Celward; and after him to Cholsey (abbey). And he bequeaths to St. Alban's the land at Tewin, and let the agreement stand that was formerly made with the archbishop, between the abbot and Ceolric; namely, that Ceolric have the portion of the land that he has for his lifetime, and also the portion that the archbishop let to him for his money; that is, seven hides and a half, for five pounds and fifty marcs of gold; and after his death let it all go together to St. Alban's. And their agreement was, that Osney also should go after Ceolric's death to the same place. And his land at London that he bought with his money, he bequeaths to St. Alban's. And he bequeaths all his books also in thither; and his (travelling) tent. And he bequeaths that his executors take the money that they find, and first pay all his debts, and then assign over the heriots that may be claimed. And he gives his ships partly to the people in Kent, partly to those in Wiltshire. And as to other matters, whatever they are, he begs Bishop Wulfstan and Abbot Leofric to arrange as they may think best. And the land to the west of Siltington, and at Newington, he bequeaths to his sisters and their sons; and let the land which was Elfeg's, Erni's son, go to his next of kin. And he bequeaths to Archbishop Wulfstan a cross to hang round his neck, and a ring, and a psalter. And to Bishop Elphege a cross. And he forgives for God's sake the Kentish men the debt they should pay him; and to the Middlesex and Surrey men the sum that he paid for them. And his will is, that after his death every man be set free, who owes a fine, which he has incurred during his time. If any prevent this will, let him answer for it before God. Amen." *

The following explanation of the will, by an anonymous writer, is here subjoined: —

"Every possessor of landed property under the Saxon kings

* Codex Diplomaticus, No. 716.

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was bound to furnish arms and men, in his proportion, for the service of the sovereign in time of war; and as Elfric's primacy was in the midst of the Danish invasions, it is natural that he should say so much in his will of ships and armour. His bequests are partly to the church at Canterbury, whose archbishops are still patrons of the livings at the three places he mentions: Westwell and Bishop's Bourne (Hooker's burial-place) in Kent, and Monk's Risborough, Bucks. The rest to different monasteries. Abingdon, where he was received in his youth; Cholsey, near Wallingford (a small abbey broken up by Henry I. when he founded the abbey of Reading), and St. Alban's; in his bequests to which he evidently alludes to some transactions during his own abbacy. By his 'books,' according to some examples in these Saxon documents, he may mean only his title-deeds; but as these would naturally go to other different places with the land to which they related, it is more probable that he intends to give what he held to be his best treasure to his favourite abbey, where his brother presided. His travelling tent was a necessary part of the equipage of a Saxon nobleman; if for no other reason, yet because he could scarcely attend a Saxon parliament without it. The witenagemot assembled every year in the summer season, near the king's country-seat, wherever he happened to be resident; and the senators encamped in some royal forest chase, whether at Woodstock, Windsor, or other places in more southern counties, generally not very far from London. It is plain that to a bishop it might be also convenient in going on his visitations. It is not so clear how the ships should be available to the Wiltshire men, inhabitants of an inland county, unless they had some right of port at Bristol or elsewhere. But we read that King Ethelred, at one period of his reign, required ships or ship-money from every landowner of a certain value, and of smaller proprietors a proportionate contribution. The debt of the Kentish men, and the sum advanced to the people of Middlesex and Surrey, was probably some relief to the distresses occasioned by the Danish wars. It is well known that under the Saxon laws, fines for different classes of offences were to be paid severally to the king, and the high sheriff, and the bishop. These last are what Elfric wishes to be forgiven at his death.

Bishop Wulfstan, one of the executors, was probably Bishop of London, who died nearly at the same time with Elfric, and not the same person with the Archbishop of York of the same name, who is mentioned just afterwards. Elphege, bishop of Winchester, is the same who succeeded Elfric as archbishop, and was martyred by the Danes. The will is altogether a record of a good subject, a good landlord, and a charitable Christian, and worthy of imitation by modern bishops for the small proportion of property bequeathed to his own nearest relations."

ELPHEGE.*

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It is impossible to enter upon the history of Elphege, and to relate the ecclesiastical affairs of the tenth century, without intruding, for a brief space, into the department of the general historian, and adverting briefly to the political circumstances of the country. A great revolution was at hand. The Danes were no longer, with reference to England, what they had formerly been: they were now seeking, not merely plunder, but a settlement in the land; without ceasing to be pirates they had become invaders. Even as pirates they were not so lawless as the Saxons represented them. Sprung from the peninsula of Jutland, from the islands of the Baltic, and the shores of the Scandinavian continent, they committed their depredations on the British coast, under the leadership — if we may use a modern expression — of princes of the blood.† The

* Authorities: — William of Malmesbury; Florence of Worcester; Matthew of Westminster; Liber Eliensis; Osbern, Vit. et Pass. Elphegi in Ang. Sac.

Aliases: — Alfegus, Huntingd., Chron. Petrob.; Alfeagus, Floren. Wigorn.

† The sea-king was a man connected with a royal race either of the small kings of the country, or of the Haarfager family, and who by right received the title of king as soon as he took the command of men. Laing's Snorro, i. 45.

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rights of primogeniture being strictly observed by their race, the eldest son of the king inherited the throne, and the heir-apparent remained at home; while the younger sons, creating a fleet, went forth to seek their fortunes on the sea. They returned home, enriched with plunder obtained from the Franks on the continent and the Anglo-Saxons in England, consisting of all the necessaries of life, clothes, domestic utensils, cattle killed and salted, slaves and other property, which enabled these sea-kings, as they were called, to establish each a new principality upon the principle of that from which he emanated himself. That those who were hailed as heroes in the islands of the Baltic should be regarded as monsters in the lands where they won their spoils is only natural and what we should expect. Nor are we surprised that, when removed from their homes, and from the public opinion they respected, they should indulge in crimes from which they would have abstained in their native land; for this is too often the case among their descendants who, proceeding from England, have formed colonies on distant coasts, at the present time. But enough has been already said to show that they were not mere barbarians, and that in point of civilisation they were not far behind the Saxons themselves. The well-equipped ships which sailed from their harbours could not have been built and furnished with all the materials for a warlike crew, except by a people who were well acquainted with many useful arts.

The carpenter, the smith, and the rope-maker must have existed; there must have been a demand for iron-work, and cooper-work, and cloth-work before even a hundred men could be transported from the shores of Norway and Denmark, to the coasts of England and France.* The very charge so frequently brought against

* Laing's Snorro, i. 132.

the Danes by the Saxons, of their having recourse in their warfare to stratagem and deceit, is sufficient to show that they were skilful strategists. What made their squadrons terrible, was their skill in lashing their prows together, by which they were enabled in one great mass, and with the power of a giant, to bear down upon the enemy. After a time a large number of them ceased to be pirates; and leaving the recesses of the sea-shore, whence they derived their title of viking or kings of the bay, they became invaders, and sought for a settlement in the land. These persons, valuing the advantages of civilisation, had established Danish colonies in different parts of the country, encouraging an intercourse with their Saxon neighbours, from whom they did not differ much in their habits and modes of thought. The sagacity of Alfred perceived that the Anglo-Saxons, were not sufficiently strong to drive these new colonies from England, and it was his policy, by uniting them in a common interest with the Anglo-Saxons, to employ them as a protection against their marauding brethren: he succeeded in assimilating the laws of the two nations; he endeavoured to convert them to Christianity, and he prepared the way for the fusion of the two races into one people, which became a permanent blessing.

This policy had been pursued by his successors, but not always with equal discretion. The Danes, unscrupulous and regardless of promises and engagements, obtained possession of nearly two thirds of the island, and were gradually gaining strength. At first the Danish chiefs had acted independently of one another, while the superior civilisation of the Anglo-Saxons had brought them to the conviction that union was strength, and they became united under one king. But now the Danes were approximating this great principle of union, while, on the other hand, the Saxons were again separating, in fact,

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though not in theory, into almost independent principalities. There was at first, with the exception of the royal families of the Heptarchy, no hereditary nobility among the Anglo-Saxons. The ealdormen were invested with great authority, but their rank was personal, they were only officers of the crown removable at pleasure. It was the wisdom of Alfred not to confide the military and the civil authority to one and the same person. To use a modern expression, he distinguished between the sheriff and the lord-lieutenant of the county. But by degrees the office of ealdorman had become hereditary. The first instance of this we find in the reign of Edred. When he had suppressed the insurrection of the Northumbrians, he committed the government of all the provinces which formerly composed that kingdom to Osulf, to whose family the office became attached. When the Mercian and East-Anglian ealdormen supported Edgar in opposition to Edwy, a similar concession had been made. The condition of this country was now therefore approaching to that of France, where the vassals of the crown had gradually converted themselves into sovereign princes, merely tendering a formal recognition of the rights of the king.

It is necessary to bear this in mind when we read the disasters of Ethelred's reign. Whatever were his faults, and they were many and great, he could not, like his predecessors, command the services of his nobles. They were too often seeking to establish their own independence, instead of securing the independence of their common country. They found it their policy sometimes to betray their king, and at others, to aid the Danes.

As the power of the king decreased they naturally looked to their own safety. Alfred, commanding all the forces of the country, had formed a militia, which could, at any time, be called out for the defence of the kingdom. But Ethelred could be by no means certain that the eal-

dormen would obey his call, or if they did, that they would place the troops under his command. Edgar, foreseeing the difficulties and the dangers arising from this state of things, had formed a kind of prætorian guard; household troops; a regiment of guards. The king could command the Saxons to rally at their own expense for the defence of the country, but his standing army he was obliged to pay. And in imitation of the Roman Emperors, the royal policy was, to employ barbarians as best qualified to oppose barbarians. To take the barbarians into the pay of the State was not bad policy, when the soldier could be commanded on some distant service: but it soon became apparent, that it was a very different thing when the soldier was residing in one small island and in the very vicinity of his kindred. They were called soldiers because they received pay*, but their perquisites were not confined to pecuniary remuneration. During their time of duty, or, in the modern parlance of courts, when they were in waiting, they freely partook of all the luxuries and refinements which the court could supply. When they were not on duty they were billeted on various houses, and at first were welcome guests. At a period when there was no taste for merely family society, and the comforts of domestic life were little known; when the master of a household lived chiefly in a large hall, surrounded by his retainers, and when strangers, who had something new to tell, were gladly received; a visit from the soldiers, with news and manners fresh from the royal camp and court, was regarded as an honour. They appeared in their red uniforms†,

* *Solidarius*, one serving for pay (*solidata*, *soldum*), soldier.

† The red uniform, which continues to be the uniform of England and of Denmark, was introduced into this country by the Danes. Laing's Snorro, i. 27. It was remarked that these soldiers made a point of taking a bath every Saturday.

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and being particularly attentive to their toilet, were in high favour with the ladies. But at last the conduct of these men became intolerable. Not contented with the repasts provided for them in the halls of their hosts, they demanded luxuries which were not easily procured; and their attention to the ladies excited jealousy. The virtue of not a few had been corrupted. Complaints against them were frequent and increased, and at the same time Ethelred became aware that he could not depend upon their fidelity. It was known that a conspiracy existed, by which, like the prætorians of old, they might obtain the power to appoint the sovereign; and it was not doubted that the sovereign they would elect would be one of their own race.

This gave rise to one of those atrocious deeds of horror, which sometimes occur, to show the deep depravity of human nature when the restraints of the law are removed. Irresistible as these prætorians were, when assembled in full array,—it was easy to dispatch them one by one,—since they were singly billeted on the different Anglo-Saxon families. A careful arrangement was probably made as to the houses in which they should be located,—and by the express order of the king, each host was on St. Brice's day *, 1002, to cause his guest to be murdered. A massacre ensued, unequalled in its iniquity, except by the Sicilian Vespers; unsurpassed, except by the atrocities of St. Bartholomew's day, and the barbarism of the French Revolution. The extent of the massacre, under the circumstances which have been described, was not perhaps so great as the traitorous king designed. As a merciful host was able to warn his guest to escape in time. But it gave occasion and opportunity for the indulgence of the

* The fullest account of St. Brice's day is given by Matthew of Westminster, with the immediate causes which led to it, and the name of the instigator, Huna. Westm. ad an. 1012. Chron. Sax. 1002.

most malignant passions, and many an innocent person, under the pretext, fell a victim to the cupidity or the cruelty of a brutal neighbour.

The vengeance of the Danes was fearful though deserved. Sweyn, to whose love of plunder was now added the stimulus of revenge, attacked the island with greater inveteracy than ever, and reduced the whole country to the extreme of misery. Every shire in Wessex was marked with flame and desolation.

It was under such circumstances that Elphege was called upon to preside over the English Church. His virtues were those which, at that time, were especially admired and esteemed. He was inflexible and stern, abundant in alms-deeds and a rebuker of the rich; severe to others, but severer to himself—the reality of his asceticism being testified by his very appearance. It was told of him that in winter he would rise at midnight, and, issuing unseen from his house, kneel, exposed to the night air while praying, barefoot, and without his great coat. Flesh he never touched, except on extraordinary occasions: his body was so attenuated, that it is said, when he held up his hand, the light was seen through it.

> "It was so wan, and transparent of hue,
> You might have seen the moon shine through."

The people in despair, not knowing where to look for human help and feeling that they deserved the Divine malediction, hailed the election of Elphege to the see of Canterbury with one burst of applause. He was translated from Winchester, on his departure from which see all Hampshire escorted him to the borders of the county, and his entrance to Canterbury was like the entrance of a victorious general.

Elphege was born of a noble family about the year 954. His enthusiasm was excited in favour of Benedictine

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reform, and the young Dunstanite determined to become a monk. He imagined that his soul's life depended upon this step; and if the tears and entreaties of his widowed mother, that he would not forsake her, caused a moment's hesitation, he overcame the scruple. Forgetful of the fifth commandment, he silenced the appeal to his affections by reminding her, that there was One whom he was bound to love before father or mother. He retired to a monastery at Deerhurst in Gloucestershire. But the monks of Deerhurst were not the men after Elphege's own heart. Living in a convent they were obliged to live by rule,—but their rule was very different from that of St. Benedict. They did not consider it to be inconsistent with their devotional duties and their literary pursuits to enjoy the pleasures of society. They appeared therefore to the young enthusiast as lukewarm, and he was especially offended "by their little junketings." The monastery seems to have been a pleasant residence. It was the resort, we are told, of many foreign clergymen who, disliking the strictness of the Benedictine rule, which had been forced upon many of the foreign monasteries, came to enjoy an easier life in England. To such a society, a man of Elphege's active temperament and ascetic propensities was not a welcome companion; nor did he hesitate to reprove them by word and by example. So much earnestness and zeal produced of course an effect, and he improved the sudden death of a monk with great success. But still it was a relief to him when he was removed to Bath, where a monastery had been founded by King Osric in 676. This monastery had been destroyed by the Danes and rebuilt by King Offa about the year 775. Offa placed here secular canons, who were removed in the reign of Edgar, and their places occupied by Benedictines.*

* Tanner.

In this monastery Elphege erected for himself a cell, and became an anchorite.* Here his extreme asceticism secured him the admiration of the monks, and they elected him their abbot.

On the death of Ethelwold, bishop of Winchester, there was a violent controversy between the secular and married clergy on the one side, and the monks on the other, as to the election of his successor. The king took the matter into his own hands, and left to Dunstan the appointment of the bishop. Whether Dunstan told an untruth on the occasion, or whether, as it is more probable, some persons misunderstood some expressions of the great minister, it is certain that it was soon reported and believed that he appointed Elphege by the command of St. Andrew. What St. Andrew had to do with the affair is not apparent, but as Dunstan was sure to turn a deaf ear to any saint who might plead in favour of the secular clergy, they were obliged to submit. The character of the new bishop was a constant theme of discourse among the monks. The virtues of which he set a bright example were those precisely to which they attached the greatest value, and the poor, relieved by the alms-deeds of a self-denying prelate, echoed the praise, and regarded him as a saint.† 984.

It was, as we have before remarked, from his high character for piety and devotion, that, with the applause of the nation, Elphege was translated to the see of Canterbury. Having visited Rome and obtained the pallium, on his return to England he united with the Archbishop of York in persuading King Ethelred to convene a council; and a council was accordingly held at Enham.‡ It was evidently more than an ecclesiastical synod,—it partook

* Ang. Sac. ii. 123; Malmsb. Gest. Pont. ii. † Ang. Sac. ii. 126.

‡ Probably Ensham in Oxfordshire.

CHAP. VII. Elphege. 1006.

of the character of a national assembly; a Witenagemot, to which, the affairs of the State being discussed as well as those of the Church, the laity were summoned as well as the clergy. The circumstances of the country rendered the meeting peculiarly solemn. The bishops and the other clergy assembled privately, each day, for conference and prayer. They pledged themselves to act together and to pray for one another. At the public services of the Church there were daily sermons; faith, hope, charity, prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance being the subjects upon which the preachers chiefly dwelt.* "The provisions of the wise men," as the decrees of the council are styled, commence with an earnest call to all men from "the English council-givers" to turn from sin, duly to love and honour the one God, and uniformly to maintain the one Christianity, to avoid heathenism, to be diligent in prayer, to aim at peace and unity, and to be loyal to the king.

There is here a reference to the peculiar trials of the time. Men were tempted to seek peace with the Danes by abjuring Christianity, and to renounce their allegiance to Ethelred from his incompetency to render them protection. The fanaticism of the age would naturally lead the counsellors, in the first place, to advert to what the people regarded as the crying evil, which ought to be put down with a high hand, the marriage of the clergy. But the secular and married clergy were not without their friends among the bishops, and these were not times when it was expedient to exaggerate difficulties or to exasperate minds already irritated. The first provision, therefore, of the council was in the nature of a compromise. The monastic vow was recommended, but if this were refused, then the clerk was exhorted to bind him-

* Spelman, i. 525; Wilkins, i. 292.

self by those regulations which were recognised by the secular canons.

The archbishop, who was not a politician, now returned to Canterbury. Here he remained in the conscientious discharge of his duty, in alleviating the sufferings of the poor and in ascetic observances as regarded himself. His peace was disturbed, however, and his patriotism as well as his piety alarmed, when accounts were received, from time to time, of the insolence, the sensuality, and the incapacity of Ethelred; of the frequent refusal on the part of one province to render assistance, when assistance was asked by another; and of a treasonable correspondence which sometimes came to light between the degraded nobles of England and the enemies of their country.

The archbishop, and all whose Christianity was more than nominal, could not but feel that the disgrace and misery impending was a retribution for the national crime which had been committed, and a visitation from the God of justice. The Danes were ministers of vengeance, employed by Him who saith, "I will repay;"—the scourge wielded by the Almighty hand of Him to whom vengeance belongeth. Humbling themselves in weeping, fasting, and praying, the consolation of Christians was, that they were in the power of Him who would control events and set limits even to a punishment however justly deserved.

But the reality was terrible. The bandit and the outlaw were permitted freely to rush forth from their hiding-places, and to the indulgence of the vilest passions the Danish leaders now offered no restraint. They revelled in deeds of darkness, and found their pastime in cruelty. Their demand was for gold. If it were withheld, all who were suspected of wealth were put to the sword; and even those who paid, perished in their flaming houses, together

CHAP. VII. Elphege. 1011.

with their violated wives and mutilated children. Over the ashes of depopulated villages the Danes continued their march of terror, until they sat down before Canterbury. They had at first some feelings perhaps of respect for the city of an archbishop, whose charities had, in times past, extended even to the Danes, and on the receipt of a sum of money they retired. But their retirement was only like that of a wave, which having in its retreat drawn with it the pebbles of the beach, returns with redoubled force to dislocate the rock itself. In 1011 they were again before Canterbury preparing for an assault. The nobles had fled; and some there were who before flying, had dared to counsel the minister of God to abandon his post, — the shepherd to act as a hireling. They were mildly rebuked, and the good old Christian buckled on his spiritual armour. But while preparing for the worst, the archbishop now showed a vigour of mind far greater than could have been expected from one who had hitherto exhibited only the virtues of a recluse. He exhorted the citizens, and the citizens, encouraged by his example, for twenty days successfully repelled the assaults of the enemy. Before relieving guard or repairing to the ramparts, each soldier was seen kneeling in the cathedral, where the archbishop, at his proper post, was always present to administer to him the holy sacrament. What would have been the result of this combination of piety, discretion, and valour, if it had not been for an act of treachery, it is useless to surmise.* On the twentieth day, the Danes were admitted by a traitor into the city. Who the traitor was is not quite clear. The Chronicle says simply that Ælmær betrayed the city, and Abbot Ælfmær was suffered to depart. Florence of Worcester distinguishes between Almar the archdeacon, the traitor,

* Ang. Sac. ii. 133—135.

and Almar the abbot. Gervase follows Florence. Later historians make them both one. Suspicion has attached to the Abbot Ælfmær, but it is possible that he owed his escape to the similarity between his name and that of the real traitor. He afterwards became Bishop of Sherborn, which would be very strange if he had been really the traitor. CHAP. VII. Elphege. 1011.

The traitor, whoever he was, set fire to one portion of the city, and when the alarmed garrison rushed to extinguish the flames, that part of the ramparts which they thus forsook was assailed and mounted by the enemy. The archbishop hoped that even the pagans would reverence his person, and determined to address them. They were too busily engaged in plundering the houses of the citizens to notice his approach, and he arrived at a spot where the carnage was fearful and the cruelty beyond description. Women were exposed to worse than death because they could not reveal to their persecutors the hiding-place of treasures which did not exist. They were excruciated with mental anguish before death came to their relief, by seeing their children, amidst the shouts and laughter of fiends in human form, tossed from spear-point to spear-point, — or by hearing their bones crushed under the waggon wheels which bore away the plunder. The archbishop, eloquent from the anguish of his heart, called upon them for their very manhood's sake, not to make war upon infants; and offered himself for death if they would but respect the women and spare the children. Instead of yielding to his entreaties, the Danes seized him, and dragged him bound as a captive, by a refinement of cruelty, to behold the conflagration of his cathedral. The archbishop knew that the church was filled with clergy, with monks, with the defenceless of both sexes. The timbers were falling; the flames reached the roof, down which flowed streams of melted lead.

CHAP. VII.

Elphege. 1011.

The people who first came forth were butchered amidst shouts of merriment. Then, that the sport might be varied, they were decimated, the tenth man being spared to become a slave. Elphege himself was reserved, for the ransom of an archbishop would be more profitable than his death.*

Towards evening, they carried him to the north gate of the city, where a kind of market was established, for the sale or the ransom of the captives. Eight hundred unhappy creatures were here assembled, the remnant of the seven thousand who are said to have fallen in the sack of the city. A subdued exclamation burst from them, expressive of their sorrow, their sympathy and alarm, as the archbishop was thrust in among them. Elphege prepared to address to them words of comfort, but a stroke from a battle-axe compelled the silence which the Danish leader enjoined. Soon after, a deputation from the officers of the enemy made their appearance, to inform the archbishop that his ransom was fixed at three thousand pieces of silver. The people entreated him to accept the terms, as his friends would sell the church plate, throughout the province, if that were needed to raise the sum required. The archbishop refused to enrich the pagans from the treasures which had been bequeathed to the Church for the honour of religion and the relief of the poor. This refinement of feeling was, of course, unintelligible to the Danes; and when they found that he could raise the money but would not, they were the more exasperated and violent. They bound him in chains, and carrying him with them wherever the army went, they kept him in durance for seven months. But Elphege was not without his consolation. A disease among the troops, occasioned by their excesses, excited

* Ang. Sac. ii. 136.

alarm, and many approached the holy man, evincing signs of remorse for their past conduct. The leaders of the army did not object to his receiving visitors, for they hoped he might be persuaded, through their entreaties, to order a sale of the church plate for his redemption. Elphege had thus an opportunity of preaching the gospel, of which he availed himself with such success, that not a few among the Danes were baptized.*

But the end was drawing nigh. The army was at Greenwich. It was the vigil of Easter. It was known by the Danes, that the Christians would congregate in various parts of the country, at that great festival, and they gave the archbishop notice, that unless the ransom was paid within eight days, his life would be forfeited. Paid it was not, and the enemy were furious in their wrath. The Danes, meantime, had not been hoarding their money. They had just procured a large supply of wine from the south, very superior to any that could be obtained from the vineyards of England. This was preparatory to a great feast, at which they gorged themselves, as was their wont. The floor was strewed with ox bones; and they now became inebriated with their south country wine. The archbishop was sent for to make them sport. "Money, bishop, money," was the cry which resounded on all sides, as he was hurried into the hall. Breathless from fatigue, he sat down for a short time, in silence. "Money, money," was still the cry, "Your ransom, bishop, your ransom." Having now recovered his breath, the archbishop rose with dignity, and all were attentive to hear whether a promise of money for his ransom would be made. "Silver and gold," he said, "have I none; what is mine to give, I freely offer, the knowledge of the one true God. Him it is my duty

* Ang. Sac. ii. 137.

CHAP. VII. Elphege. 1012.

to preach; and if you heed not my call to repentance, from His justice you will not escape." Some one, more heartless than the rest, here threw an ox bone with all his force at the defenceless old man, and amidst shouts of laughter, the cowardly example was followed. The missiles which the floor plentifully supplied, were hurled at him, till he fell in an agony of pain, but not dead. There was standing by, a Dane, whom Elphege had baptized and confirmed on the preceding day. He knew not how to assist his spiritual father, but he was moved by feelings of pity and compassion. It is clear that he revolved in his mind what step he would take if his favourite war-horse were mortally wounded; and knowing that in such a case, he would, as speedily as possible, put him out of his pain, he lifted up his battle-axe, and as an act of Christian charity, clave in twain the skull of Elphege, archbishop of Canterbury.*

When the wine of the south had done its work, and the Danish leaders had time for sober reflection, they felt remorse for their conduct, and delivered the archbishop's body, without a ransom, to his friends for burial. The corpse was removed from Greenwich to London, where it was received as the body of a martyr, and interred with great pomp, the bishops of London and Dorchester officiating.†

Ten years elapsed, and London saw another sight. The barge of a Danish king was nobly painted and adorned with golden ornaments, to receive on board the corpse of Elphege. It was preceded and surrounded by a Danish guard of honour, and followed by the chief members of the Danish court. It was welcomed to their cathedral by the inhabitants of Canterbury, and deposited by the side of the illustrious Dunstan.

* Ang. Sac. ii, 141. † Chron. Sax. 1012—1023.

LIVING.*

Living or Elfstan was educated at Glastonbury and was consecrated to the see of Wells in the year 999. Glastonbury was the Eton of the Anglo-Saxon period, and according to William of Malmesbury seven archbishops of Canterbury were Glastonbury men.† From that school we may easily suppose that the chapter of Canterbury would be supplied, and when the canons of Canterbury were driven from their cathedral, they naturally repaired to the home of their youth in the isle of Avalon. It is thus that we may account for the election of Living to the metropolitan throne on the death of Elphege in 1013. The king was powerless and the canons were free to elect. Their election fell upon Living because he was known to them, and because, under the circumstances of the time, a translation was more expedient than a new consecration.

We look out for circumstances to account for the choice of one whose character contrasts unfavourably with that of his martyred predecessor. The first historical event of Living's episcopate, is the flight of the archbishop from his church and country. Whether before his flight he was subjected to persecution on the part of the Danes, as later historians have supposed, it is impossible to say, in the silence of contemporary writers on the subject. But he was not at his post.

The state of the country is thus briefly described by Florence of Worcester under the year 1013, in which the appointment of Living to the archbishopric of Canterbury is mentioned:—

* Authorities:—Birchington; Roger of Hoveden; Simeon of Durham; Florence of Worcester; William of Malmesbury.

Aliases:—Lefwing et Leving, Huntingd.; Lifingus, Dunelm.

† Gesta Regum, ii. 184.

CHAP. VII. Living. 1013.

"In the month of July, Sweyn, king of the Danes, came with a strong fleet to the port of Sandwich, and after remaining there for a few days, departed; and sailing round East Anglia, entered the mouth of the river Humber; thence he went up the river Trent as far as Gainsborough, and encamped there. Earl Uhtred and the Northumbrians, and the inhabitants of Lindesey, immediately submitted to him; then the people of the five burghs, and afterwards all who dwelt north of Watling Street, that is, the street which the sons of King Weatla made right across England, from the eastern to the western sea; and having agreed upon a peace with him, and given hostages, swore fealty to him; (then) he commanded them to supply his army with horses and provisions. Having completed these arrangements, and intrusted the army and hostages to his son Canute, he made a selection from those who had submitted to him, and made an expedition against the South Mercians, and, passing Watling Street, gave orders to his men to lay waste the fields, burn the vills, pillage the churches, slay all the men who fell into their hands, keep the women to appease their lust, and do as much mischief as ever they could. Then he came to Oxford (his men all the while obeying his orders, and rioting with beastly ferocity), and got possession of it sooner than he expected; and taking hostages, he hastened on to Winchester. On his arrival at Winchester, the citizens (terrified at his excessive cruelty) quickly made peace with him, and gave him as many hostages of his own selection as he chose to demand. Having taken the hostages, he moved his army towards London, but many of his men were drowned in the river Thames, because they would not (take the trouble to) seek for a bridge or a ford. On reaching London, he tried in various ways to take it, either by stratagem or by force. But Ethelred, king of the English, and the citizens, assisted by the often-mentioned Danish Earl Turkill, who was then in the city with him, bravely defended the city walls, and drove him off. Thus repulsed, he departed, pillaging and destroying, as usual, everything in his path, and went first to Wallingford, and afterwards to Bath, where he sat down to refresh his army. Then there came to him Athelmar, ealdorman of Devonshire, accompanied by the western thanes, who made peace with him, giving hostages. Having accom-

plished all things according to his wishes, he returned to his fleet, and was called and esteemed king by all the English people, if indeed he can be called a king who acted in most things like a tyrant. Moreover, the citizens of London sent hostages, and made peace with him; for they feared that he was so enraged against them that he would deprive them of all their property, and either cause their eyes to be put out, or have their hands or feet amputated. When King Ethelred saw this, he sent Queen Emma into Normandy, to her brother, Richard the Second, earl of Normandy, together with his sons, Edward and Alfred, their tutor Alfhun, bishop of London, and Alfsin, abbot of Medhamstead. He himself, however, remained for a short time with the Danish fleet, which then lay in the river Thames, at a place called Grenewic (Greenwich), and afterwards sailed over to the Isle of Wight, and celebrated Christmas there. After Christmas he sailed to Normandy, and was honourably received by Earl Richard. Meanwhile, the tyrant Sweyn commanded that his fleet should be abundantly supplied with provisions, and ordered that payment of an almost insupportable tribute should be made. Earl Turkill issued the same orders with respect to the fleet which was lying at Greenwich: in addition, each of them went plundering whenever he choose, and committed great enormities." *

The archbishop we may presume was also attendant upon King Ethelred. An event unexpectedly occurred, of which (as little to be expected) Ethelred was, for once in his life ready to avail himself, and so regained his throne. The king was at Rouen when messengers arrived announcing the death of Sweyn. The Danish fleet immediately chose the young prince Canute for his successor with the unanimous approbation of the Danes. The proceedings of the English shall be given in the words of the Saxon Chronicle:—

"Then counselled all the witan who were in England, clergy and laity, that they should send after King Ethelred; and they

* Florence of Worcester, ad ann. 1013.

CHAP. VII. Living. 1014.

declared that no lord could be dearer to them than their natural lord, if he would rule them better than he had before done. Then sent the king his son Edward hither with his messengers, and ordered them to greet all his people: and said that he would be to them a faithful lord, and amend all those things which they all abhorred, and each of those things should be forgiven which have been done or said to him, on condition that they all, with one consent, would be obedient to him, without deceit. And they then established full friendship, by word and by pledge, on either half, and declared every Danish king an outlaw from England for ever. Then, during Lent, King Ethelred came home to his own people; and he was gladly received by them all. Then after Sweyn was dead, Canute sat with his army at Gainsborough until Easter (17th April); and it was agreed between him and the people of Lindesey that they should find him horses, and that afterwards they should all go out together, and plunder. Then came King Ethelred thither, to Lindesey, with his full force, before they were ready; and then they plundered and stormed, and slew all the people whom they could reach. And Canute went away out with his fleet, and thus the poor people were deceived through him, and then he went southward until he came to Sandwich, and there he caused the hostages to be put on shore who had been delivered to his father, and cut off their hands, and ears, and noses. And besides all these evils, the king ordered the army which lay at Greenwich to be paid twenty-one thousand pounds. And in this year, on the eve of St. Michael's mass (28th September), came the great sea-flood wide throughout the land, and ran so far up as it never before had done, and washed away many towns, and a countless number of people." *

The archbishop returned with the king, and by his advice a council was held at Habam.† Here it was enacted that God be loved and honoured before all things, and His mercy and assistance invoked with fasting, alms, confession, and abstinence from all evil; that the king

* Sax. Chron. ad ann. 1014.

† Habam or Badam; perhaps Hadham.

should be obeyed, that one penny should be paid for every plough-land, and that every hirman (parishioner) should pay one penny and every thane pay a tithe of all he hath. It was also enacted that every Christian of age should fast on bread and water and raw herbs, before the feast of St. Michael, for three days. But the canon which is of more general interest, and which throws light upon the condition of the country is the 8th, which relates to the office of judge:—

"A judge ought to acquit himself in all respects, both as to mercy and judgment, so as in the first place to decree satisfaction in proportion to the crime, according to right knowledge; and yet to do it in measure, for mercy's sake. Some crimes are deemed by good judges to be satisfied for according to strict right: others to be pardoned for the mercy of God. Judgment ought to be without 'haderung,' that they may not spare to pronounce common right against rich and poor, against friend and enemy. And nothing is more unjust than taking bribes for subverting of judgment; because gifts blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the just. The Lord Jesus hath said, 'With what judgment ye have judged, ye shall be judged.' Let every judge fear and love his (sovereign) Judge, who sees all things, lest at doomsday he be dumb in His presence. He who oppresses the innocent and acquits the guilty for money, love, or hatred, or out of any faction, shall be oppressed by the Almighty Judge. Let no lord depute any imprudent or wicked judges, lest the one through ignorance, the other out of covetousness, decline from the truth, which he hath been taught. For the poor are more grievously worried by wicked judges than by the (most) violent enemies: no enemy more bitter, no plague more effectual, than a domestic adversary. One may by flight or defence escape wicked enemies; but not judges when they are ill affected to the subjects. Good judges often have evil deputies, or ministers, whose principals become guilty if they do not restrain them, and put a stop to their rapacity. For the Lord and Minister of the world says, 'Not only they who do, but consent to evil are worthy of eternal death.' Wicked

CHAP. VII.

Living. 1020.

judges do often pervert judgment, and not finish a cause till their own desires are satisfied; and when they judge not deeds, but study for bribes, they are; according to the word of wise men, 'like greedy wolves in the evening, which leave nothing till the morning;' that is, they consider only the present life, and not at all that which is to come. Wicked reeves are wont to take away all they can, and not to leave so much as necessary subsistence. An angry judge cannot attend to the just satisfaction of the doom (book), for through the blindness of his fury he cannot discern the right though never so clear. Judgment is just, when there is no consideration of persons, for it is written, 'regard not the person of man in judgment.' Taking of a bribe is an abandoning of the truth." *

We hear nothing of the archbishop during the brief but glorious career of Edmund Ironside — the King Arthur of the Anglo-Saxons; and if he were concerned, as probably he was, in effecting the pacification of Olney, the part he bore in the transaction was so insignificant that it is not mentioned.

During the first years of Canute's reign the country enjoyed repose, and we might have expected to find the archbishop employed in the restoration of his cathedral. But he contented himself with replacing the roof, and left the rest of the work to be accomplished by the energy and piety of his successor. He sat for seven years. He did not receive the pall. The ecclesiastical authorities at Rome had made a regulation, which they seem at this time to have enforced stringently, that it should only be conferred on a personal application, and Living wisely dispensed with the honour rather than become again an absentee. He died in 1020, and was buried in the cathedral.

* Johnson i. 499; Wilkins, i. 295.

ETHELNOTH.*

Ethelnoth was the son of Egelmær the Earl†, and was a Glastonbury man. That he distinguished himself at school we infer from the attachment he evinced towards the place of his education. He obtained the grant of additional privileges for the monastery from Canute, and he is reported to have written its history. He was first a monk of Glastonbury, then Dean of Canterbury, and chaplain to Canute the king. Other preferment he declined until a vacancy occurred in the see of Canterbury. The position of the archbishop was next to that of the sovereign, and he was the first among the advisers of the crown. But every other preferment would have taken him away from the court, and, as chief chaplain to the king, he exercised the office to which the title of chancellor was afterwards attached. Of Canute he was the intimate personal friend, "encouraging the king," as William of Malmesbury remarks, in his good actions by the authority of his sanctity, and restraining him in his excesses. ‡ This friendship was honourable to both parties.

From the days of St. Paul to the present hour there is no more memorable instance of the Divine power, in the conversion of souls and in the sanctification of our fallen nature, than that which we possess in the history of Canute. In Constantine and in Charlemagne we have, especially in the former, the history of men who made the propagation of the Gospel and establishment of the

* Authorities :— Saxon Chronicle; Florence of Worcester; William of Malmesbury; Roger of Hoveden; Simeon of Durham.

Aliases : — Agelnothus, Sim. Dunelm., Hoved., Westm., Chron. Petrob.; Athelnold, Henry Huntingd.; Egelnothus, Chron. Mailr.; Egelnodus, Malmesbury; Æthelnothus, Flor. Wigorn.

† Flor. Wig. 1020.

‡ Gesta Regum, ii. 184.

CHAP. VII. Ethelnoth. 1020.

Church an object to which they devoted their first attention. But in their private life we look in vain for the fruits of the Spirit; and how far they were influenced by political views, how far by a belief in the truth they had intellectually accepted, will not be known before that great day when no secrets will be hid and when every deed of darkness will be brought to light. Religion is not merely scriptural truth in the *head*, it is Divine grace in the *heart*, and when life and grace are in the heart the affections will be set on the things above, and the conduct will be consistent in its struggles after perfection.

Alfred was indeed a Christian hero, he was a greater and a better man than Canute, but then Alfred did not rise from such a depth of iniquity; he, from his youth upwards, notwithstanding his shortcomings, had served the Lord. But when first we become acquainted with Canute we find him no better than his father Sweyn, a savage barbarian, plundering, burning, slaying, and destroying, violating treaties, as in the case of Uhtred*, cutting off the hands, ears, and noses of his hostages, condemning men to death on mere suspicion. After his accession to the throne, however, Canute became a changed and altered man. He not only valued and promoted the blessings of peace, but in his humility and unostentatious piety presented an example of Christian excellence to his subjects. He rebuked the flattery of his courtiers, and, on one occasion when he had been hurried into the commission of a crime, he proved that he did not regard the chief magistrate of the country as being above the obligations of the law, by his submission to the legal penalties. With Ethelnoth for his adviser, the principle of his state policy was to abolish all distinction between the Danish and the Saxon races, and to form them into an united people. So sup-

* Lappenberg, ii. 186.

essful was he in his endeavours, that from this time we CHAP. VII.
ose in history the rival parties of Danes and Saxons, both Ethelnoth.
being united under the common name of the English in 1020.
repelling foreign aggression, and in resisting the Norman invasion.*

In Church matters, where the influence of Ethelnoth was more direct, his enlarged views were equally conspicuous. Ethelnoth was himself a secular, and the predilections of Canute to the party of the seculars were evinced by his placing the church he erected at Assingdon under the control of a secular priest; but, wherever people desired it, Benedictine monasteries were established, and every facility was afforded to the chapters of cathedrals and larger churches to adopt the Benedictine rule when such was their pleasure. The consequence was, that the seculars ceased to be persecuted, and although, in deference to public opinion, the married clergy were not encouraged, they were permitted, without molestation, to cultivate the domestic virtues, until the triumph of celibacy under the Normans.

In 1020 the see of Canterbury was vacant, and Ethelnoth was nominated by the king as primate of England. The chapter on this occasion do not appear to have been even consulted. A charter was issued by the king, and a mandate directed to Wulfstan, archbishop of York, for the consecration of the archbishop designate. The following letter was Archbishop Wulfstan's reply: —

"Wulfstan, Archbishop, humbly greeteth King Canute, his lord, and Elgive (Emma) the lady.—And I inform you, beloved, that we have done to Bishop Ethelnoth as came to us in the notice from you, that we have consecrated him." †

* Malmesb. Gest. Reg. ii. 481.

† Mores, Comment. de Ælf. 209; Cod. Dipl. 1314.

CHAP. VII. Ethelnoth. 1020.

In the earlier ages of Anglo-Saxon history, it has been remarked by a learned antiquarian, that if the people were occasionally allowed to concur in the choice of their chief pastor, the instances of such elections are far less numerous than those which might be adduced to show that the nomination was vested in the sovereign. This power, indicated in the earliest age of Saxon Christianity, was fully established after the Danish invasion. When Edward the Confessor, as we shall presently see, notified the promotion of a prelate, it was by the promulgation of a charter, which stated that he had given and granted the bishopric and all that thereto belonged, without any reference to an election.*

Having settled his affairs at Canterbury, and made pro-

* In this paragraph I have merely abbreviated the statement of Palgrave, Rise and Progress, i. p. 173. The same fact is thus asserted by Lingard: "In historical records of the ninth and tenth centuries we meet with frequent mention of the succession to bishoprics; but the vague and doubtful language of the authorities throws but little light on the subject, sometimes describing the appointment as made by the unfettered choice of the clergy and people, and sometimes as proceeding solely from the absolute will of the sovereign. The probability is that both were conjoined, that the recommendation of the prince operated as a command; while the choice of the clergy and people was a mere form preliminary to the confirmation and consecration of the prelate elect. Thus it was certainly under our native kings, the descendants of Egbert, who, however, appear to have disposed of the most important sees in national councils, and with the consent of the bishops and ealdormen; but under Canute and his successors the will of the king was notified in a more imperious manner, and by them the practice of investiture with the ring and crosier seems to have been introduced. From that period the mitre frequently became the reward of intrigue and influence: the new bishops were generally selected from the twelve chaplains of the king, or the clerical favourites of some powerful earl; and the nomination of the monarch was often made to fall on the most ambitious or the least worthy of the applicants. In this respect the simplicity of Edward the Confessor appears to have been frequently deceived." — *Lingard, Hist. Anglo-Saxon Church*, i. 85.

vision for a temporary absence, the archbishop proceeded to Rome in 1022, and was received with distinction by Benedict VIII. 1022.

Benedict VIII. was the first of the Tusculan Popes. The Counts of Tusculum, now in the ascendency in Italy, had the Roman people in their power and pay, and appointed Popes with the most undisguised simony. Benedict, whatever were his faults as a minister of religion, was not wanting in ability or courage. If Ethelnoth could boast to the Pope of the heroic actions of his master Canute, the Pope in turn could recount his own great deeds in arms, when, by his activity and personal prowess, a powerful armament of the Saracens, who had landed in the territory of Pisa at Luna, was attacked and cut off almost to a man; and when his general, Poppone, archbishop of Aquileia, took Capua and placed its prince at the mercy of the emperor.

From Rome Ethelnoth proceeded to Pavia; and we know how he was there employed. The archbishop, mixing freely with all classes of society, exercised a beneficial influence over the young nobility. He was intimate with Leofric Earl of Mercia and with the celebrated Lady Godiva, whose virtues are still commemorated by a triennial procession in the ancient city of Coventry.* The monastery at Coventry had been destroyed by the Danes, but Earl Leofric, who was among the zealous church restorers of the age, had not only rebuilt it but had decorated it with a profusion of costly ornaments. William of

* In that procession, in former years, the writer of these pages has borne his part in common with the other citizens of Coventry, who are not more distinguished for the enlightened zeal which leads them to adopt every improvement in trade, than for the care they bestow in the preservation of those venerable remains of antiquity with which their noble city abounds, connecting the present with the past.

CHAP. VII. Ethelnoth. 1022.

Malmesbury* tells us that the walls were covered with silver and gold. Ethelnoth wished to make a contribution, such as would be becoming on the part of an archbishop and give satisfaction to his young friend. A relic from Pavia, — this he thought would be the gift which, as something rare, would be valued most. The archbishop had gone to Pavia that he might visit the tomb of St. Augustine of Hippo, whose body had been translated to that city. And for some relic of St. Augustine he made inquiry. The demand was soon met by the production of a dead man's arm. It was a period when men easily believed what they wished to believe. No one would deny the assertion that this was the right arm attached to the hand which penned those wondrous tomes of theology, to which the modern Calvinist, though often unconsciously, is so deeply indebted. But now comes the price, which is interesting to us because it reveals to us the value of relics. Ethelnoth tried to become possessor of the treasure for the sum of one hundred talents of silver; but it is asserted by some that the skilful trader in relics did not part with it until he had squeezed from the archbishop the additional sum of a talent in gold.† Ethelnoth returned enriched by his treasure to England,— and was repaid by the pleasure he imparted to Leofric.‡

Ethelnoth himself became a church restorer. He determined to repair substantially the cathedral which his predecessors had merely patched up, and through the munificence of the king in addition to his own outlay he enriched and adorned it.

There are two sets of canons published under the name

* Gest. Pont. lib. iv. † Malmsb. G. Reg. ii. 184.

‡ As Leofric's foundation is placed in 1043, we must suppose that the church was twenty years in building.

of Canute, in which we may trace the hand of the archbishop, but there is nothing in them which requires remark, except that the conciliatory tone is observed throughout. This is frequently the tone assumed by a revolutionary government* such as Canute's must be regarded, but in this case it evidently proceeded from a kind and Christian disposition.

Between the years 1027 and 1031 Canute was frequently absent from the country and the archbishop sustained the royal authority in conjunction with the Earls of Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumbria, to whom the king committed vice-regal authority. It is difficult to assign the date of Canute's visit to Rome.† But whatever was the time of the visit the result is mentioned in a letter which the archbishop received from him dated on shipboard on his way to Norway :—

"Canute, King of all England, and of Denmark, Norway, and part of Sweden, to Ethelnoth, Metropolitan, and Alfric, Archbishop of York, and to all the bishops and prelates, and to the whole nation of the English, both the nobles and the commons greeting: — I notify to you that I have lately taken a journey to Rome, to pray for the forgiveness of my sins, and for the welfare of my dominions, and the people under my rule. I had long since vowed this journey to God, but I have been hitherto prevented from accomplishing it by the affairs of my kingdom and other causes of impediment. I now return most humble thanks to my God Almighty for suffering me in my

* Canute was elected to the kingdom, and according to the constitution the monarchy was elective, but the choice was confined to the members of one family, and by passing by that family the constitution was violated, although, perhaps, few cared for this after the election had once taken place.

† A contemporary writer states that Canute was present at the coronation of Conrad, which took place at Rome in 1027, whereas the Saxon Chronicle, Florence of Worcester, and other English writers place the journey to Rome in 1031.

CHAP. VII. Ethelnoth. 1027.

lifetime to visit the sanctuary of the apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul, and all others which I could find either within or without the city of Rome, and there in person reverentially worship according to my desire. I have performed this chiefly because I have learnt from wise men that St. Peter the apostle has received from God great power in binding and in loosing, and carries the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and therefore I esteemed it very profitable to seek his special patronage with the Lord.

"Be it known to you that, at the celebration of Easter, a great assembly of nobles was present with our lord the pope John, and Conrad the emperor; that is to say, all the princes of the nations from Mount Garganus to the neighbouring sea. All these received me with honour, and presented me with magnificent gifts; but more especially was I honoured by the emperor with various gifts and valuable presents, both in gold and silver vessels, and in palls, and very costly robes. I spoke with the emperor himself, and the lord pope, and the princes who were there, in regard to the wants of my people, English as well as Danes; that there should be granted to them more equal justice and greater security in their journeys to Rome, and that they should not be hindered by so many barriers on the road, nor harassed by unjust tolls. The emperor assented to my demands, as well as King Rodolph, in whose dominions these barriers chiefly stand; and all the princes made edicts that my people, the merchants as well as those who go to pay their devotions, shall pass to and fro in their journies to Rome in peace, and under the security of just laws, free from all molestation by the guards of barriers or the receivers of tolls. I made further complaint to my lord the pope, and expressed my high displeasure that my archbishops are sorely aggrieved by the demand of immense sums of money when, according to custom, they resort to the apostolical see to obtain the pallium; and it is decreed that it shall be no longer done. All things, therefore which I requested for the good of my people from my lord the pope, and the emperor and king Rodolph, and the other princes through whose territories our road to Rome lies, they have most freely granted, and even ratified their concessions by oath: to which four archbishops, twenty bishops, and

an innumerable multitude of dukes and nobles who were there present, are witnesses. Wherefore I return most hearty thanks to Almighty God for my having successfully accomplished all that I had desired, as I had resolved in my mind, and having satisfied my wishes to the fullest extent. CHAP. VII. Ethelnoth. 1027.

"Be it known, therefore, to all of you, that I have humbly vowed to the Almighty God himself henceforward to amend my life in all respects, and to rule the kingdoms and the people subject to me with justice and clemency, giving equitable judgments in all matters; and if, through the intemperance of youth or negligence, I have hitherto exceeded the bounds of justice in any of my acts, I intend by God's aid to make an entire change for the better. I therefore adjure and command my counsellors to whom I have entrusted the affairs of my kingdom, that henceforth they neither commit themselves, nor suffer to prevail any sort of injustice throughout my dominions, either from fear of me, or from favour to any powerful person, I also command all sheriffs and magistrates throughout my whole kingdom, as they tender my regard and their own safety, that they use no unjust violence to any man, rich or poor, but that all, high and low, rich or poor, shall enjoy alike impartial law; from which they are never to deviate, either on account of royal favour, respect of person in the great, or for the sake of amassing money wrongfully, for I have no need to accumulate wealth by iniquitous exactions.

"I wish you further to know, that, returning by the way I went, I am now going to Denmark to conclude a treaty for a solid peace, all the Danes concurring, with those nations and peoples who would have taken my life and crown if it had been possible; but this they were not able to accomplish, God bringing their strength to nought. May He, of His merciful kindness, uphold me in my sovereignty and honour, and henceforth scatter and bring to nought the power and might of all my adversaries! When, therefore, I shall have made peace with the surrounding nations, and settled and reduced to order all my dominions in the East, so that we shall have nothing to fear from war or hostilities in any quarter, I propose to return to England as early in the summer as I shall be able to fit out my fleet. I have sent this epistle before me in order that my

CHAP. VII. Ethelnoth. * 1027.

people may be gladdened at my success; because, as you yourselves know, I have never spared, nor will I spare, myself or my exertions, for the needful service of my whole people. I now, therefore, command and adjure all my bishops and the governors of my kingdom, by the duty they owe to God and myself, to take care that before I come to England all dues belonging to God, according to the old laws, be fully discharged; namely, plough-alms, the tithe of animals born in the current year, and the pence payable to St. Peter at Rome, whether from towns or vills: and in the middle of August the tithes of corn; and at the feast of St. Martin, the first-fruits of grain (payable) to every one's parish church, called in English *civic-sceat*. If these and such like dues be not paid before I come, those who make default will incur fines to the king, according to the law, which will be strictly inforced without mercy. Farewell." *

In 1035 the archbishop was summoned to Shaftesbury to attend the death-bed of his royal friend and patron.† There is no parting scene described, but we can imagine the feelings with which two men, who had acted such distinguished parts in the theatre of the world, parted in time under the full assurance of meeting in eternity. All that we know of their last consultation is, that the king enjoined the archbishop strictly to observe the compact which entailed the crown of England upon his sons by Emma. Thus was Canute true to the last to his queen, the widow of Ethelred, and to his English people.

And faithful was the archbishop to his promise, displaying both firmness and discretion when the throne was seized by Harold Harefoot. He was summoned to attend the coronation, and he attended with the regalia, most probably at Winchester. He placed the insignia of royalty upon the altar and said, "These are the crown and sceptre which

* Florence of Worcester, Chron. ad ann. 1031.

† Chron. Sax. 1035.

Canute committed to my care. To you, sir, I neither refuse nor present them. Take them if you think fit to do so. But I strictly prohibit any of my brother bishops to usurp an office which is the undoubted prerogative of my see."* CHAP. VII. Ethelnoth. 1035.

Harold remained unanointed during the lifetime of Ethelnoth; who having thus served his royal master faithfully to the last, prepared to follow him. He died in October 1038, and we may mention it as an instance of the personal attachment with which he was regarded by his friends, that Ethelric, bishop of the South Saxons, had prayed that he might not outlive the archbishop, and survived him only seven days.

EADSIGE.†

Of the parentage and birthplace of Eadsige nothing is related. The earliest mention of him presents him to our notice as one of the chaplains of Canute. He was then a secular, and of course in priest's orders. The king seems to have designed him to be the successor of Ethelnoth, and thinking that an opposition might be raised by a certain party against the appointment of another secular clergyman, he persuaded the monks of Folkstone to admit his chaplain a member of their society, and as a remuneration granted to them certain privileges.‡ The wishes of Archbishop Ethelnoth accorded with those of the king with re- Eadsige. 1038.

* Encom. Emm. p. 27.

† Authorities: — Henry of Huntingdon; William of Malmesbury; Ingulf.

Aliases: — Eadsius, Brompt., Hoved., Westm., Wigorn; Eudsi, Hunting.; Edscius, Chron. Petrob.; Edgius, Chron. Mailr.

‡ Cod. Dipl. 1327, anno 1032.

CHAP VII. Eadsige. 1038.

ference to his successor. And, being an old man, he consecrated Eadsige to be his coadjutor, as early as 1035, under the title of Bishop of St. Martin's. St. Martin's is that church in which Queen Bertha prayed, and Liudhard preached, of which we have spoken in the life of Augustine. Some antiquarians have supposed that there was a succession of bishops in this church invested with a chorepiscopal or archidiaconal authority, to officiate in the absence of the archbishop.* But it is impossible to assent to this assertion, because it is next to an impossibility that there should have been a succession of bishops in one church, without a record of their consecration, and with only the name of two out of the number handed down to us.† Eadsige is the first Bishop of St. Martin's with whom we are acquainted. Eadsige himself had occasion to appoint a coadjutor, but he was consecrated under the title of Episcopus Upsallensis, and was not called Bishop of St. Martin's.‡

The refusal of Archbishop Ethelnoth to crown Harold Harefoot has been already mentioned; but Harold was nevertheless crowned, as will appear from the following extract from Ingulf, which is given at length, as it makes us acquainted with the condition of the country and the state of affairs after the death of Canute:—

"On the death of the king the dispute of his two sons, Harold and Hardicanute, for the crown, seemed to be pregnant with a furious war. The Danes of London espoused the side of Harold the son of Elgiva of Northampton, but whose claim to be the son of Canute common report asserted to be false; while the English and the rest of the country gave the preference to Edward, the son of King Ethelred, and next to him Hardi-

* Somner and Battely's Canterbury, part i. p. 150; part ii. p. 131.

† Godwin, bishop of St. Martin's, died, according to the Chronicle, in 1061.

‡ It is possible that his successor received the title.

Canute, the son of Canute by his queen Emma. Terrified by his threatening state of affairs a vast multitude of men and women, with their children and movables fled to Croyland, attracted by the mere suspicion of war, to the swampy fens, the alder woods, and muddy ponds, as their strongest camp of refuge. These interlopers never ceased to disquiet the whole monastery by their complaints and representations, continually intruding into the cloister, and either by means of the servants of the monastery, or by themselves, pouring into the ears of the monks stories of their own privations, and seeking to conciliate the favour of the lords of the place by assiduous flattery. Tormented by this, the monks deserted the cloister, and scarcely had the courage to descend from their dormitories to perform divine service in the choir, or participate at the common table in the refectory. None, however, was so thoroughly distressed at their vexatious conduct as Wulfy, a recluse of the clerks of Pegeland, whose life was made a burden to him by the clamours and exclamations with which these daily and nightly councils were distinguished; till, at length, with a bandage round his eyes, he started for Evesham, and there, shutting himself up in a cell adjoining a certain chapel, he has remained up to this day. Eventually, England was divided between the two brothers germane. Hardicanute obtained the provinces to the south of the Thames; Harold, the northern provinces, together with London and the whole country on this side that river. This division, however, did not last long, for Harold, taking advantage of Hardicanute's prolonged absence in Denmark, raised himself to the throne of the entire kingdom of England. This prince presented to our monastery his coronation robe of silk, interwoven with golden flowers, which our sacrist afterwards converted into a cope, and (such was the favour which the lord abbot Brichtmer found with him) would have conferred many more advantages upon us, if he had not been snatched away by a sudden and premature death, just as he was creeping over the entrance of his reign. He died after having occupied the throne four years, and having only had time to taste, as it were, the fruits of sovereign sway, and was buried at Westminster." *

* Ingulf: ed. Savile, p. 508.

CHAP. VII.

Eadsige. 1038.

The king found Eadsige ready to execute the office which Ethelnoth declined, and this probably was his recommendation to the see of Canterbury. He seem to have been a time-server. He had been chaplain to Canute; he crowned Harold; he was in favour with Hardicanute; he was the counsellor and friend of Edward the Confessor; and from his concessions to the foreign propensities of the last-mentioned monarch, he incurred the anger of the stout Earl Godwin.

Eadsige was translated in 1038, and repaired to Rome for the pallium.* Through all the revolutionary period in Italy to which we have had occasion to refer, and notwithstanding the secularity and vice of the Popes, the ecclesiastical courts of Rome continued the routine of business, and, ever since the promulgation of the Pseudo-Isidore Decretals, were steadily advancing their pretensions and increasing in power. Nevertheless our worthy archbishop must have been struck with the incongruity, when he saw in Benedict IX. a boy Pope. Through the irresistible gold of the house of Tusculum, the nephew of the preceding Popes Benedict and John had been consecrated to the papal chair at ten or twelve years of age†; and now, in his nineteenth or twentieth year, was giving a licence to his passions which would have scandalised any court in Europe except that of Rome, where vice had long been rampant.

On his return home Eadsige, in 1043, was called upon to officiate at the coronation of Edward the Confessor. This was the memorable event of his life. He preached on the occasion, and had in the king a willing auditor, ready to receive any quantum of advice when given by an archbishop. The sermon made a great impression,

* Chr. Sax. 1040.

† "Puer ferme decennis, intercedente thesaurorum pecunia, electus exstitit a Romanis."—*Rodolphus Glaber*, iv. c. 5.

nd is thus alluded to in the Saxon Chronicle, 1043. "This year was Edward hallowed king at Winchester on the first day of Easter with much worship; and then was Easter on the third of the nones of April. Archbishop Eadsige hallowed him, and for his own need and all the people's well admonished him."

Very soon after Eadsige gave symptoms of a disease,—some affection, it is presumed, of the brain, which entirely incapacitated him for business. The king, under the advice of Earl Godwin, sequestered the property and appointed Siward to administer the see. We conclude that this occurred soon after the coronation of Edward, because Siward was consecrated bishop of Upsal in 1044.* This bishop is reported to have treated him harshly, and is even accused of withholding from him the necessaries of life. The archbishop, however, survived his coadjutor, recovered his health, and administered his diocese for some years. Resenting, probably, the conduct of the chapter, although they only did what was unavoidable, in supporting his *locum-tenens*, Eadsige, on making his will, left his property to the rival establishment of St. Augustine's, where Thorn saw a psalter and a glossary his gift. He died in 1050.

* Ang. Sac. i. 106.

CHAP. VIII.

ROBERT OF JUMIÈGES AND STIGAND.*

Robert Champart.— A Monk of Jumièges. — Friend of Edward the Confessor. —Character of Edward. — Robert made Bishop of London by Edward.— Accuses Queen Emma.— Forms a party against Earl Godwin. — Alien Priories.—Translated to Canterbury.—Goes to Rome.—Leo IX.—On his return promotes the cause of the Normans in England.—Eustace of Boulogne. —Banishment of Godwin. —Visit to England of William the Bastard.— The return of Godwin and his Family. — Settlement of State affairs through Stigand, Bishop of Winchester. — Robert fled the country, deposed, outlawed. *Stigand.*—Chaplain of Emma.—Bishop of Elmham.— Deposed.— Restored. — Court of Edward contrasted with that of Hardicanute.—Stigand, a supporter of Godwin the Earl.— Opposed to the Normans.—History of Godwin.— Stigand translated to Winchester.—Archbishop of Canterbury. — Consecration of Westminster Abbey. — Death of Edward. — Election and Coronation of Harold. — Battle of Hastings.—Edgar Atheling anointed—Stigand and Edgar yield themselves to William. — Stigand does not crown William.—Is taken by the Conqueror to Normandy.—Tyranny of the Normans in England.— Stigand with Edgar fled to Scotland.— Camp of Refuge at Ely.—Betrayed to the Normans.—Pope Alexander at William's request sends his Legates to England.—They depose Stigand and the English Prelates.—Stigand's character vindicated.—He was persecuted.—His Death.

CHAP. VIII. Robert.

ROBERT CHAMPART was by birth a Norman. He was Abbot of Jumièges, a monastery on the Seine †; he had formerly been a monk, and in that capacity became the intimate friend of Edward, afterwards King of England, who for twenty-seven years had been an exile, and was in heart alienated from his own country, having become a complete Frenchman. There are some persons upon

* Authorities: — Saxon Chronicle; William of Malmesbury.

† Gallia Christiana, xi. 958.

whom, as the poet remarks, greatness is thrust; and we may add, there are others who obtain a character for goodness which they scarcely deserve. They have been so circumstanced, that it has become the interest and delight of posterity to overlook their faults, and to array them in imaginary virtue. The mere cackle of the common has sometimes sounded in the ears of enthusiasm as the sweet notes of the dying swan. The last sovereign of the house of Cerdic appeared to the imagination of the Saxons, when groaning beneath the Norman yoke, as a hero of romance. His virtues were those which were most admired in the monastery, and he was canonised by the monks. He was no lawgiver, but in his reign the Anglo-Saxon laws were revised, and until the revolution of 1688, "to observe the laws of good King Edward" was one of the clauses of the coronation oath taken by every sovereign of England. But no man becomes great or really good, who does not give his heart and mind to perform the work, which his hand findeth to do, the duties assigned to him by the circumstances under which he has been placed, not by chance, but by the providence of God.

It is no praise of Edward the Confessor to say that he possessed the virtues of a monk; and he was rebelling against God when he neglected the cultivation of the few talents he possessed by nature that he might qualify himself for the office of king. In every relation of life he was contemptible. Incapable of performing the duties of a husband, he had the villany to purchase the support of the great earl, through whose interposition he acquired his throne, by marrying his daughter.* United by an ordinance of the Church to one of the most lovely women

* Edward the Confessor was king by election, not as we should now say, by hereditary right; for a son of Edmund Ironside, called Edward the Outlaw, the father of Edgar Atheling, was still alive.

CHAP. VIII. Robert.

of the age, equally admired for her beauty, her intellectual acquirements, and the purity of her morals under the most trying circumstances, he not only treated her with neglect, but, when he possessed the power, was base enough to dismiss her from his court and to consign her to a prison.* An Anglo-Saxon king, his heart was devoted to the enemies of his country. He quailed before patriots whose very language sounded foreign to his ears, which were open to the soft speeches of Norman flatterers, in whose society only he found recreation and pleasure. Under the influence by turns of opposite parties, he had the weakness to encourage the hopes of rival pretenders to the crown, and entailed upon his country the miseries of a disputed succession.

To do common justice to the patriots, who, reviled and misrepresented by Anglo-Norman writers, fought bravely for their country, and endeavoured to frustrate those traitorous proceedings in which Robert of Jumièges was deeply involved, we are compelled to speak thus of a sovereign to whom, as a traitor to his country, we find a parallel only in James II.

The heart of Edward, surnamed the Confessor, was in the cloisters of Jumièges, when, by his demure looks and sanctimonious proceedings, he gave to his English palace the appearance of a foreign monastery. He had solemnly promised his suspicious nobles that he would not bestow his patronage upon foreigners, or surround himself with Normans. As soon as he was established firmly upon his throne, he gave proof that the violation of his pledges and promises was not inconsistent with his notions of morality; and among the Normans summoned to England was

* The enemies of her family were compelled to admit her merits, while vilifying her father. "Sicut spina rosam genuit, Godwinus Egitham."—*Ingulf*, 509.

obert of Jumièges. The king was crowned in 1043, and Robert was consecrated bishop of London in 1044. Being bishop of London, owing to the imbecility of Eadsige, archbishop of Canterbury, he was *de facto* primate. "So high," says an ancient chronicler, "did he stand in the king's estimation, that if he had said a black crow was a white one, the king would sooner have believed the bishop's word than his own eyes." * He employed his influence over the royal mind to lay the foundation of the future conquest by establishing a Norman party in England.

Robert. 1044.

Although Edward was under no deep obligations to his mother, the bishop of London dreaded her influence with the king. The ground of this jealousy, the queen-mother being herself a Norman by birth, is not apparent, but the fact is not disputed. By later chroniclers it is stated that Robert accused her of an intrigue with Alwin, bishop of Winchester, and a detailed account is given of the manner in which she cleared her character, by undergoing, unscathed, the ordeal of fire. But they forget that the queen must, at this time, have been at least seventy years of age. All that we know is, that the bishop of London treated her with contumely and contempt.

Robert had a severer task when he determined to organise a party against Earl Godwin, the sturdy representative and leader of the Anglo-Saxon interest.

Godwin was father-in-law to the king, but was no favourite. The blunt manners of the earl and his sons contrasted unfavourably with the polished flatteries of the bishop of London and the Frenchmen, who, in spite of Godwin's remonstrances and the royal stipulation, flocked to Edward's court. The family of Godwin ridiculed the foreigners, and laughed at the superstitious absurdities of the king.

* Ang. Sac. i. 291.

CHAP. VIII. Robert. 1044.

Their witticisms or sarcastic remarks were careful repeated, with exaggerations, in the royal ear. The earl family was so powerful that they would not condescend to be courtiers, and only occasionally visited the palace. An earldom was a viceroyalty, and Godwin's earldom comprised Sussex, Kent, and the greater part of the South of Wessex. Of his sons, Harold exercised vice-regal authority over East Anglia, and the shires of Huntingdon, Cambridge, and Essex; Sweyn, over the North of Wessex, or the shires of Oxford, Gloucester, Hereford, Somerset, and Berks; that is to say, the family ruled those provinces which constituted the richest and largest part of England, and having the power in their hands, when remonstrances were fruitless, they left the king in the hands of Robert and the Frenchmen, whom they despised.

They little knew the crafty character of the bishop of London, or his skill in the management of affairs. Robert was a consummate politician, as his success soon showed. He filled the palace with his own countrymen. French was the language of the court, and to ape the manners of the French became the fashion. The king was taught to despise the English. Lands were bestowed upon foreigners, and there they erected castles, such as existed in Normandy, and afforded an effectual protection against a hostile population. The national strongholds were garrisoned by French and Norman soldiers, under the command of leaders of their own nation. French citizens settled in many of the greater towns, and were admitted to the same privileges as the Saxons.

But the master-stroke of Robert's policy was the introduction of alien priories. A priory is a cell or smaller convent attached, as a kind of colony, to some distant monastery. When a large monastery possessed a manor or a right to the tithe in a distant part of the country, the rents being paid in kind, these cells were established that

in the inmates they might have faithful stewards of their revenues. In these small convents certain monks took up their abode, and their president was called a prior. Alien priories were so called, because they were the cells in England of some continental abbey. These were now for the first time established in this country. As the spirit of the age was in favour of the increase of monastic institutions, to the accomplishment of this plan no difficulty presented itself. The alien priories were filled with foreigners, and thus the whole island became dotted with Norman colonies, ready to co-operate with the invader.

The friends of England and of her church began now to take alarm, of which Robert received the first intimation, when, in 1050, intelligence came to the court, not only of the death of Archbishop Eadsige, but of the astounding fact that the chapter, without any *congê d'élire*, had already elected his successor. For the purpose of keeping out the bishop of London, the chapter of Canterbury had elected Ælric*; a person against whom no objection could be urged, a man of business habits, very acute in worldly matters, respected and beloved by the whole fraternity of Canterbury. The monks of St. Augustine were, on this occasion, prepared to countenance and assist the chapter in their proceedings, and entreated the Earl Godwin to support the election. The conduct of the chapter was the more marked and offensive to the king and his courtiers, from the circumstance of Ælric being a near kinsman of Earl Godwin; and it was regarded as a protest against the foreigners. Godwin repaired to the court and urged the king to sanction the election. But the powerful earl could not prevail against the sinister influence of the royal favourite, and, by a charter from the king, Robert was translated from the diocese of 1050.

* Vita Edwardi Regis: ed. Luard, p. 399.

CHAP. VIII. Robert. 1051.

London to the metropolitan see: an act of despotism on the part of the crown, which excited the just indignation of the Church, and alarmed the country.*

As if to defy public opinion, a similar proceeding was adopted in the appointment of Robert's successor in the see of London. The person elected by the chapter was put aside. The patriots made a stand, but without success. The Saxon Chronicle for 1051 says: "Spearhafoc, abbot of Abingdon, succeeded to the bishopric of London; and it was afterwards taken from him before he was consecrated;" and again, "This same year was given to William the Priest, the bishopric of London, which before was given to Spearhafoc." William was a Norman. These were measures sufficiently arbitrary.

The archbishop felt now so secure of his power that he went to Rome for his pall. We have hitherto seen archbishops of Canterbury contrasting favourably, by their moral conduct and exemplary lives, with the bishops of Rome and the ecclesiastics of Italy, who had become mere politicians, utterly regardless of the peculiar functions of the sacred ministry. But now we have an intriguing politician representing the Church of England, and standing before a Pope who, determined to reform his Church, was himself distinguished for moral excellence in private life, for his attention to all the duties of his sacred calling, for his charity to the poor, and for his eloquence as a preacher. The German Emperor had determined to rescue the papacy from the demoralising influence of the counts of Tusculum and the barons of Rome. He nominated to the papal see, and the Roman

* An account is given in the life of Ethelnoth of the right asserted by the crown to nominate to the vacant bishoprics. The words of the biographer, with reference to the appointment of Robert, are significant: "Regis munere archiepiscopus, totius ecclesiæ filiis hanc injuriam, pro nisi suo reclamantibus."—*Vit. Edw.* p. 400.

people dared not refuse, a German prelate of noble descent, and nearly related to the Imperial family. Leo IX. having entered Rome, not in pontifical state, but in the garb of a pilgrim, was conducting his reforms with firmness, but with discretion, having for his adviser a young man, Hildebrand, who was afterwards to become the celebrated Gregory VII.

On his return to England, the new archbishop did not display a conciliatory disposition. We find him engaged in a controversy with Earl Godwin on a question relating to property. Godwin had lands adjacent to the estates belonging to the see of Canterbury, and a dispute on some point having arisen, the archbishop conducted himself in a manner so offensive, that it required all the earl's influence to prevent his people from taking the law into their own hands and punishing the Frenchman for his insolence. The archbishop had an object in all this. He knew how eagerly the king would side with him in any controversy in which he might be engaged, and his whole object was to alienate the royal affections from the Godwin family. "The careful earl," says the chronicler, "patiently bore with the archbishop, either out of respect to the king or from the natural disposition of his race, which does nothing rashly or in a hurry, but knowing that many things through precipitation are brought to nought, designedly bides his time." *

It is difficult to understand how the country could be induced to tolerate the insults which were offered to it at this period. Not only were the chief preferments in Church and State conferred upon the Normans, but the manners of the feudal barons on the continent were already introduced, and those Anglo-Saxons, who were mean enough to seek patronage at such a court, were obliged to forego the use of their noble Saxon language, which the

* Vit. Edw. p. 400.

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imbecile king affected not to understand. The insolence of the foreign nobles at length became unbearable. They seemed to suppose the rest of mankind created merely to minister to the wants and pleasures of an aristocratic caste.

A memorable instance of their pride and folly now occurred. Eustace, count of Boulogne, a Norman, was married to Edward's sister, the widow of another Norman. On his way to the continent, in the very wantonness of insolence, when approaching Dover, he quitted his palfrey, donned his armour, and mounted his charger; and at the head of an armed retinue took possession of the place as if it had been a conquered town. The townspeople rose up in arms. Nineteen of the Normans were killed. The proud count fled before the independent English. The whole country was roused. Eustace, unable to approach the harbour, turned his horse's head and stopped not in his flight until he had reached the king at Gloucester.

Out of this event the archbishop was not slow to make political capital. He inflamed the king against the townspeople, and against Godwin, under whose government Dover was included. The order was given for military execution. It was, of course, directed to the earl. Godwin, however, had no notion of punishing his countrymen for the sin of the Frenchmen. He suggested an enforcement of those Saxon laws to which Edward's name had become attached, but which he was very careful not to observe. These laws never recognised a blind vengeance upon a whole town, — all that could legally be demanded was an investigation: the magistrates might be cited in legal form before the king or the royal judges, to account for their conduct. "But it is not right," said Godwin to the king, "to condemn without hearing the men whom it is your duty to protect." *

* Malmsb. Gest. Reg. ii. 199.

This plain constitutional language in the mouth of one who may be considered as the leader of the opposition, the great advocate of the people and of the working classes, was intolerable to the party now in power, with the archbishop at its head. The archbishop persuaded the king to convoke a council at Gloucester, where the earl was accused of disobedience and rebellion. Godwin at first proposed to attend and vindicate his conduct, yet on finding that, through bribery and corruption, he was not likely to attain a fair hearing, he threw himself upon the country.

The Frenchmen were alarmed, but the archbishop was on his guard. He waited until the volunteers, who had risen to support Godwin, had dispersed. He then augmented the royal troops and secured the command for the king's nephew. It was natural that the troops should be commanded by the king's nephew if the king could not take the command himself; but this nephew was Ralph of Mantes, a Frenchman.* The camp was formed near London, and in the midst of it, the national council was appointed to be held. Godwin and two of his sons were summoned to attend, without an escort and unarmed. They, of course, declined, unless some guarantee for their personal safety were given. They were ordered in consequence to leave England within five days. The property of the family was seized and confiscated. The queen was committed to prison; not even her beauty or her virtues protecting her. The archbishop was completely triumphant. †

So complete was his triumph that an invitation was sent to William, duke of Normandy, proposing a visit to the English court. He came, and found the country garrisoned by Normans. Normans officered the fleet, which saluted him at Dover. Norman soldiers garrisoned

* Flor. Wig. 1051. † Chron. Sax. 1051.

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the fortress — he was addressed by the officials in Church and State in his own language. There can be little doubt that the weak king promised the duke to procure for him the succession to the English crown, although no express stipulation may have been made to that effect.

Equally in favour with the King of England, his adopted, and with the Duke of Normandy, his natural sovereign, the archbishop might now have looked forward to a long enjoyment of the fruits of his successful intrigues and exertions.

But he knew not the Anglo-Saxon character: it is perhaps unintelligible to a Frenchman. There was an under current of indignant feeling by which the surface was soon to be disturbed. It was rumoured that Godwin was about to make a descent upon the coast; but the fleet was in the hands of the Normans, and there was joy in the intelligence which reached the court that Godwin had suffered a reverse. He had, on one occasion, to retreat, his forces being inferior. But soon after intelligence came, not only that he had effected a landing, but that the southern counties had sent in their adhesion to the earl In spite of Norman officers, the crews of all the ships and the army itself had pronounced for the patriots, wherever Godwin had made his appearance. There was nevertheless a strong force at the command of the Government; and the king's ministers, at whose head was the archbishop, were not wanting in the ability and vigour demanded by the crisis.

A proclamation was issued declaring Godwin to be a traitor, and calling upon all loyal subjects to stop his progress. But his progress was not stopped, and he appeared with a powerful fleet in the Thames. The exiles sent, through Stigand, bishop of Winchester, a respectful message to the king, entreating a reversal of

the sentence which had been pronounced against them; and Edward, still under the influence of Archbishop Robert, at first refused.

But when the king was made to understand that his own troops were disaffected, he became alarmed, and alarm inspired him with unusual determination and vigour. He sent for the bishop of Winchester, who exhorted him to cease to be the head of a party, and to become the king of England, to dismiss the foreigners, and to yield to the very reasonable and moderate petition of the patriots.* The king consented to abide by the decision of a Witenagemot, which was accordingly held. At this Witenagemot, over which Stigand presided, Godwin and his sons were reinstated in their respective governments, and the Normans were banished from England, as the enemies of the king.

But long before this sentence had been pronounced, the aristocratic rabble had disappeared. They fled, and they escaped; the patriots not thinking it worth their while to prevent them. The archbishop with Ulf, bishop of Dorchester, had recourse to flight, when they heard that Stigand had been sent for.

The two prelates were well horsed, and were good horsemen: they did not stop till they came to Eadulf's Ness, on the coast. No vessel was there to convey them to the opposite shore. The whole country was hostile, and if detected, their ecclesiastical character would have been no protection to them. When, therefore, they discovered one small shattered fishing vessel, they dared in it the perils of the deep, and Robert, archbishop of Canterbury, heard, when he reached the opposite coast, that by a legal sentence of king and witan he was deposed.

* Chron. Sax. 1052.

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The ex-archbishop immediately proceeded to Rome, to procure the interposition of the Pope in his favour.*

Once only in the history of the Church of England, during the Anglo-Saxon period, had an English prelate presumed to appeal to Rome from the decisions of an English tribunal; and then, though the decision was in his favour, he gained nothing by his disloyalty, for Church and State in England treated the papal rescript with contempt. Now, when the Anglo-Saxon dynasty was drawing to a close, the same independent spirit was evinced. In defiance of any papal decree Archbishop Robert was deposed, and Archbishop Stigand installed.

Robert retired to his monastery at Jumièges, and there he died.

STIGAND.*

Stigand.

The first historical notice we have of Stigand introduces us to him as the chaplain, adviser, and minister of Queen Emma, the widow first of Ethelred, and then of Canute. As such he must have been associated with Godwin the Earl, in the time of Hardicanute.†

The kingdom of the East Angles had, in 673, been divided into two dioceses, of which Elmham‡ was one. The sister diocese of Dunwich had been united

* Malmesb. Gesta Reg. ii. 199.

† Authorities:—William of Malmesbury; Ingulf; Ordericus Vitalis; Matthew of Westminster; Simeon of Durham; Roger of Wendover; Wilkins' Concilia.

‡ Sax. Chron. ad ann. 1043. Encom. Emmæ, 25, 26.

§ Elmham is now a parish containing a population of less than two thousand souls. It is situated in Norfolk.

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with it in the ninth or tenth century. To this diocese Stigand was appointed at the close of Hardicanute's reign, but was not consecrated till April, 1043.* He was consecrated to the episcopal office by Archbishop Eadsige and by the bishops assembled to crown King Edward the Confessor. But he shared the fate of his royal mistress; the Saxon Chronicle containing this statement, "Stigand the priest† was blessed bishop of the East Angles. And soon after the king caused all the lands which his mother possessed to be seized into his hands, and took from her all that she possessed in gold and in silver and in things unspeakable, because she had before held it too closely with him. Stigand was deposed from his bishopric, and all that he possessed was seized into the king's hands, because he was nearest to his mother's councils, and she went just as he advised her, as people thought."

We form no mean opinion of Stigand's diplomatic powers when we find him, in the following year, not only restored to his bishopric, but attached also to the king's court and person as one of the royal chaplains. And this was accomplished without any unworthy compromise. He secured for the queen, Emma, the enjoyment of her dower and a residence at Winchester, where, being now advanced in years, and acting under Stigand's advice, she henceforth abstained from politics. There had been some misunderstanding between the Queen Dowager‡ and Godwin the Earl, of late years; although at one period of his life they had acted cordially together. By the wise coun-

* Sax. Chron. ad ann. 1043.

† Stigand was called priest, because he was not a monk.

‡ I give this title to the Queen, as Henry of Huntingdon informs us that Emma, on her marriage, was crowned and received the title of Queen. Hunt. p. 752.

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sels of Stigand, a reconciliation now took place, and Stigand was himself regarded as a leader of Godwin's party in the state.

Stigand, as the chaplain of Emma, had seen something of the court of Hardicanute, who treated his followers with the profusion of youth. "Four times a day were the tables of his great hall laid with royal sumptuousness for his whole court," and it is remarked that the fragments were distributed among persons not invited to the feast, after the invited guests had been satisfied, instead of being used for the succeeding repast. Henry of Huntingdon, who narrates the liberality of Hardicanute, and who wrote about a hundred years afterwards, adds significantly, "In our time it is the custom, whether from parsimony, or as they themselves say, from fastidiousness, for princes to provide only one meal a day for their court." *

In Edward's time, the court, under the direction of Robert, the monk of Jumièges, now bishop of London, with whom the reader is already acquainted, assumed the character of a monastery; and the following anecdote, carefully preserved and frequently repeated, shows the character of the king, It is doubtless embellished and exaggerated, but it is founded on fact, and is recorded by Matthew of Westminster.† "Once upon a time, when the king, being at Westminster on Easter-day, had been holding a court in kingly fashion, and was sitting at table; he suddenly raised his voice and laughed very loudly, and so turned the eyes of all the guests upon himself; and when they all marvelled at his having laughed thus without any reason, as they fancied, when, after dinner, the king had turned into the withdrawing room, and had said to the king, 'O lord king, we saw an unusual circumstance to-day, at which we all marvelled, because we

* Hunt. p. 758. † Matthew of Westminster, ad ann. 1066.

never beheld you laugh so openly before, nor was there, as we imagine, any cause which excited your laughter.' The king answered him, 'I saw a strange thing, and therefore it was not without cause that I burst out laughing.' Then the nobles who were sitting around, not at all supposing that so great a man had laughed without any reason, began humbly to beg of him to condescend to explain to them the cause of his excessive mirth. And when he had been wrought upon by their frequent entreaties, he said, 'More than two hundred years are elapsed since the seven sleepers in the cave of Mount Cœlius, near Ephesus, have been resting on their right sides; but now, since we first sat down at table, they have turned on their left sides, and there will lie seventy years more.' But when those who were present heard this, they asked him what this turning of the men portended? And he said, 'Of a truth that turning is full of an omen of dire import to mankind. For wars and oppressions of nations will torment the human race in an intolerable degree, and there will be changes of many kingdoms, and through the virtue of Christ, the pagans will be crushed by the Christians.'".

Godwin and his sons, not relishing this style of conversation, absented themselves from the court more and more; and the bishop of London was the better able to surround the king with foreigners. Among these some regarded the simplicity of Edward as a sign of his superior piety, and all flattered his weakness while they encouraged him in the notion of his being a saint. To the flatterers of Edward we trace the superstition which prevailed to the time of Queen Anne, that the royal touch was efficacious for the cure of an evil, to which from that circumstance the royal name was attached.

The fate of Stigand is so mixed up with that of Godwin, that it is not irrelevant to allude to the character of

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this wonderful man, who, like Stigand, was persecuted by contemporary libellers, and whose character very few among modern historians have taken the trouble to vindicate or investigate.

Of one great crime was Godwin accused: the murder, under circumstances of great cruelty, of Alfred, the brother of Edward, who, allured by a letter, probably forged, but received as coming from his mother Emma, had made a descent upon England to obtain the crown in the reign of Harold Harefoot. Godwin was acquitted by the witan of the crime, and he denied it most solemnly on oath. We need not repeat the invention of the Anglo-Norman writers, that he was choked by a piece of bread, when, on a very unlikely occasion, he went out of his way to declare his innocence to the king; for every one is now persuaded that he died of an apoplectic fit.

A lie serves its purpose for the generation which it was intended to deceive, but the power of the father of lies is limited and circumscribed. The very anecdote which was narrated as an irrefragable proof of Godwin's guilt, is, in an age in which we can regard this portion of his history with feelings of impartiality, a clear proof of his innocence. We conclude that if any evidence of the great earl's guilt could have been produced, such a story as this, to which all credit is refused, would never have been invented.

As the death, so the early life of Godwin is attended with romantic circumstances. The account of the rise of this extraordinary man, as given in the Knytlinga Saga, is accepted as historical by Thierry. The Danes were frequently defeated by Edmund Ironside; and after one of their defeats, which took place on the southern boundary of Warwickshire, a Dane, whose name was Ulf, was, in his flight, separated from his men, and found himself in the midst of the Saxon district. A peasant lad was

seen not far off driving a herd of oxen, and Ulf made bold to inquire the way which would take him to the Severn, where the Danish fleet was moored. The young herdsman detected immediately in the stranger one of the enemies of his race, and expressed his wonder and his indignation at his venturing to address a Saxon. But the Dane renewed his solicitations, and Godwin hesitated what to do. He told him that the way was long, that the late victories had roused the spirit of the country, and that if taken, there would be little mercy shown to the Dane or his guide. Ulf drew a ring from his finger and presented it to the young Saxon, who looked upon it with curiosity, and then returned it, saying, "I will not take your ring, but I will render the assistance you require." They went to the hut of Wulfnoth, the father of young Godwin, who approved of his son's generous offer, but telling Ulf that it was his only son who risked his life to save him, entreated him to make provision for his security, since, if discovered, the anger of the Saxons would consign him to death. Ulf was grateful as Godwin had been generous. He treated him as he would have treated a younger brother. He obtained for him from Canute military rank. Canute soon perceived the genius of the man, and Godwin was mainly instrumental in furthering the great work which Canute had at heart, the fusion of the two races. Godwin was the connecting link between the Saxon and the Dane, and as the leader of the united English people, became one of the greatest men this country has ever produced, although, as is the English custom, one of the most maligned.*

The over-confidence of Godwin in his own popularity and power, and the contempt which he felt for the king,

* Antiq. Celto-Scandicæ. Compare Freeman's Memoir on Earl Godwin, p. 131, in the Archæological Journal.

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rendered him unsuspicious of the intrigues of Robert, the bishop of London, which were carried on the more effectually when, in 1047, Stigand was translated to Winchester.

Edward the Confessor could not deny the claims of his chaplain, supported as he was by the interest of Godwin, and unopposed by Robert. The bishop of London did not oppose the nomination of Stigand to the see of Winchester, because the appointment would remove him from the royal presence, (as the king chiefly resided in London,) and enable the foreigners to intrigue the more successfully against Godwin and the patriots.

The success of these intrigues, and the subsequent defeat of the foreigners, have been narrated in the Life of Robert; where we have shown that Stigand acted with the firmness of a patriot and the moderation of a Christian, the pacification which ensued being attributable in great part to the wisdom of his counsels.

After the deposition of Archbishop Robert by the Witenagemot, Stigand was called upon to administer the see of Canterbury, in conjunction with that of Winchester. The year after we conclude that his translation was effected, as we find him appending his signature (as archbishop) to a public document.* He had soon after to mourn, with the public, over the sudden death of Godwin; and to regret the good-natured carelessness of Harold, who permitted the king to surround himself once more with his Norman friends. Harold had, however, obtained a power over the king's mind, which the Normans were never able again to shake. He was the victorious leader of his forces, and when at home the king treated him with an affection which might be called paternal.

The archbishop was now chiefly occupied by his episcopal duties, but he was summoned to Westminster at

* Cod. Dipl. 799.

the close of the year 1065 to assist at the consecration of Westminster abbey. CHAP. VIII. Stigand. 1052.

I shall present the reader with a poetical description of the consecration of Westminster abbey, from "La Estoire de Seint Aedward le Roi:" *

"Now he laid the foundations of the church
With large square blocks of grey stone;
Its foundations are deep,
The front towards the east he makes round,
The stones are very strong and hard.
In the centre rises a tower,
And two at the western front;
And fine and large bells he hangs there.
The pillars and entablature
Are rich without and within.
At the bases and capitals
The work rises grand and royal:
Sculptured are the stones,
And storied are the windows;
All are made with the skill
Of a good and loyal workmanship.
And when he finished the work,
With lead the church completely he covers.
He makes there a cloister; a chapter-house in front,
Towards the east, vaulted and round,
Where his ordained ministers
May hold their secret chapter;
Refectory and dormitory,
And the offices in the tower.
Splendid manors, lands, and woods
He gives, confirms (the gift) at once;
And, according to his grant, he intends
For his monastery royal freedom.
Monks he causes there to assemble,
Who have a good heart there to serve God,

* This poem, in Norman French, was published for the first time by the Record Commission in 1858, under the able editorship of Mr. Luard, to whom the reader is also indebted for the translation.

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And puts the order in good condition,
Under a holy and ordained prelate;
And receives the number of the convent,
According to the order of Saint Benedict." *

The following is the author's description of the consecration of the church:

"On Christmas night seizes him
A fever, which much inflames him.
The king lies down,—cannot eat,—
For long time seeks to repose himself;
Feebleness in the morning troubles him;
Nevertheless the king gets up
For the great feast: during the day
He dissembles and hides his pain:
The feebleness quite prostrates him;
Nevertheless, on this day, crown
And regalia he carries with difficulty;
And for the three days of the week,
At table, though it troubles him,
In the palace at dinner he sits.
On the fourth day, which was that of the Innocents,
The prelates come, the chiefs come
To furnish whatever appertains
To so great a dedication.
The king forces himself to come there
Since for it he had a great longing;
But so weak and ill is he,
So much doubt has his head, and feebleness has his heart,
He cannot be, according to his wish,
Present, which much afflicts him;
But much he commands and admonishes
That the feast should be full."†

The king soon after became delirious, and in the wanderings of his mind was continually uttering strange things, which were repeated as wonderful visions, the purport of which depended upon the wishes of the re-

* P. 244. † R. 281.
‡ William of Malmesbury, lib. iv.

porter. Contradictory stories were in circulation in the palace. The Normanisers asserted that he had mentioned as his heir the Bastard of Normandy; and the English averred, that, at the earnest desire of his counsellors, he had nominated, as his successor, Harold his brother-in-law. While the courtiers were astonished, and even statesmen were perplexed, it is recorded to the honour or the disgrace of Stigand, that he spoke contemptuously of those who paid regard to the dreams of an old man in his dotage.* The archbishop was above the superstitious feelings of the age, and like other members of the Godwin party, affected a bluntness of speech in opposition to the palavering of the French flatterers, which was so acceptable to the weak-minded king. There was a want of reverence, and a hardness of manner which rendered him unpopular. But his firmness of principle was of great importance at this juncture.

The moment the king died, the archbishop, as the first man in the country, summoned the witan. Although the crown was, under certain restrictions, elective; yet the right of primogeniture was by no means ignored, and under ordinary circumstances the eldest son succeeded his father. But the Witenagemot reserved to itself the power of disregarding the claims of an incompetent person. Edgar Atheling was the heir to the throne, but he was a child †, and the exigencies of the time were such as to require a king who should not only reign but also rule, — a man of vigour, strong in body and of a

* Vit. Edw. p. 431.

† Edgar Atheling died sixty years after these events. Edmund Ironside married in 1015; his eldest son, Edward, could not have been born earlier than that year. He was Edgar's father, and died in 1057. It is not probable that Edgar would be born before his father was twenty years old; if he was, still it would make him ninety years old when he died. The probability is, that in 1066 he was not more than ten years of age.

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commanding mind. The majority of the Witenagemot acted on the principle of the convention-parliament at a later period of our history. They appointed a person who, though not of royal blood, was by marriage related to the crown: and Harold was elected. He immediately conferred an earldom on Edgar, to show that there was no hostile feeling towards the royal youth, and he ascended the throne. On the throne of England was thus placed the grandson of a cowherd, "tall, open-handed, and handsome," the first man of his age.

As the archbishop, after the election of the Witenagemot, before placing the crown on his head*, presented him to the people, and the people ratified the choice by one long, loud, patriotic shout, Stigand must have experienced the pleasure which those enjoy who, after years of difficulty, doubt, and danger, have at length achieved, as they imagine, the great object of their sublunary ambition and desire. Old England was once more free. The detested Normans, it was supposed, were for ever expelled. An invasion was expected, but Harold the Saxon was supposed to be more than a match for William the Bastard.

Within a few months, all these expectations and hopes were dashed to the ground. The battle of Hastings had been fought, and the victory there gained rendered William the Bastard irresistible.

Soon after the fatal battle of Hastings, we find the archbishop in London, where a council was held to decide upon the course to be pursued. The Londoners were well armed, and armed men could be obtained from the north, but there was no chieftain of sufficient intellectual powers to

* That Harold was crowned by Stigand is asserted by Ordericus Vitalis, lib. iii. 460; William of Poictiers, p. 196; and we may add by William the Conqueror himself, as the statement of these writers is supported by the figures in the Bayeux tapestry. Thierry concurs, i. 152.

take the lead. With Harold fell the Saxon dynasty, because after him no Saxon leader presented himself capable of commanding the masses, or of directing the energies of the people; whereas, in William, the Normans possessed a master-mind, with a determination which nothing could resist, with great powers of dissimulation, and with a heart hard as the nether millstone. CHAP. VIII. Stigand. 1066.

The Witenagemot in London were perplexed how to act. The Earls Edwin and Morcar were ambitious of the crown, but they were neither of them men of sufficient energy and character, nor would either withdraw his claims such as they were. Under these circumstances, the witan fell back on the principle of legitimacy, and Edgar, young as he was, was elected king. A coronation was impossible under the circumstances of the time. But the only important part of a coronation, according to the principles of the age, was the unction. We have instances of kings being crowned more than once, but not of their being twice anointed.* Archbishop Stigand anointed Edgar, and Edgar is spoken of in many of the chronicles as the anointed king.

It is of importance to notice this circumstance, as in this we find the reason why Stigand did not officiate at the coronation of William the Bastard.

But the Witenagemot was soon forced upon another course of proceeding. It was useless to place a boy on the throne, unless there were a powerful regent. Such either Edwin or Morcar might have become, but this office they were unwilling to assume. Meanwhile the Norman troops were approaching in various directions. Barbarians, as bad as the Danes, they were pillaging towns, burning villages, and committing all manner of

* See the whole subject treated in Maskell, iii. xv.

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atrocities. The Londoners, without a leader, were exposed to the intrigues of the Normanisers, of whom there were not a few within the walls of the city. It was at length determined by the Witenagemot to make terms with the Conqueror. He was allied to the Saxon royal family. He might reign as a constitutional sovereign. Acting as Canute had acted, he might unite the several races of the country under one government, and in due time the house of Cerdic might be restored.

Stigand acted with discretion and boldness. He would not fly and leave the young Prince Edward to the mercy of the Conqueror. Accompanied by the Archbishop of York, Wulfstan, bishop of Worcester, several of the most eminent among the thanes, and the leading citizens of London, the Archbishop of Canterbury took Edgar Atheling by the hand, and in his name tendered the submission of all parties. Overpowered by the force of arms, they were reduced to this necessity by the chances of war. William, who could assume much courtesy of manner when it was politic to do so, was most gracious on the occasion. He saluted Stigand as his bishop, and treated him with the reverence and respect due to his office.

The respect and reverence shown by William to Stigand was so marked, as to have been recorded by most of the chroniclers, and this refutes the story circulated by the Normans, that the reason why the Archbishop of Canterbury did not officiate at the coronation of William, was an objection on the part of the Conqueror to be crowned by one who lay under the papal censure. He had received the archbishop cordially, and he always treated him with respect, until Stigand felt it to be his duty to renounce allegiance to the Norman crown. Neither can we accept the English version of the story, that Stigand refused to officiate because he regarded William as a homicide and

an usurper, for he had only just before, with Edgar's permission, done him homage.*

Whatever reason, however, may be assigned for the absence of the archbishop at the coronation, that there was no misunderstanding between the king and Stigand on the occasion, is proved by the marked attention which, for a long time, and immediately after the coronation, the king continued to show to the archbishop. The king always rose to salute him when he entered the room, and, when the archbishop attended him into Normandy, orders were given that, wherever he went, he should be received with a procession.

In the early part of the year 1067, Stigand was summoned, as Archbishop of Canterbury, to attend the Conqueror at Pevensey. He took with him Edgar the Atheling, and met the Earls Edwin and Morcar, together with other dignitaries in church and state. There, on that fatal field where their hopes had perished, they were compelled to see the ornaments and rewards distributed to the Norman soldiers who had followed the three-lioned standard to England. There, too, the king was pleased to command the attendance of the archbishop and the Saxon nobles, to form part of his retinue, during a visit to Normandy, which he was about to make.

Various motives have been attributed to William for leaving England so soon after his conquest. The real one probably was that which is most simple, and quite unconnected with political considerations,—a desire to enjoy a triumph in his native land, where the wisdom of his proceedings in invading England, had been at first

* Brompton, in his Chronicle, p. 962, declares that Stigand himself refused to perform the ceremony. So is it also stated in the Chronicle of Battel Abbey. Wido states that he was present on the occasion. Lappenberg, Anglo-Norman Kings, 107.

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canvassed and questioned, and where he determined to display, by the magnificence of his court and the liberality of his gifts, the grand result of conquering a nation, far in advance of Normandy in what related to the arts of civilisation and the comforts of life. The account of William's progress shall be given in the words of Ordericus Vitalis, a monk of English birth, but a thorough-going Norman by education and choice. "King William set sail in the month of March, and crossed the sea in safety to his native dominions. He took with him, in honourable attendance, Stigand, the archbishop, Edgar Atheling, cousin of King Edward, and the three powerful earls, Edwin, Morcar, and Waltheof, with Ethelnoth, governor of Canterbury, and several others of high rank and most graceful persons. The king adopted a courteous policy in thus preventing these great lords from plotting a change during his absence, and the people would be less able to rebel when deprived of their chiefs. Besides, it gave him an opportunity of displaying his wealth and honours in Normandy to the English nobles, while he detained, as a sort of hostages, those whose influence and safety had great weight with their countrymen.

"The arrival of King William, with all his worldly pomp, filled the whole of Normandy with rejoicings. The season was still wintry, and it was Lent; but the bishops and abbots began the festivals belonging to Easter, wherever the new king came in his progress; nothing was omitted which is customary in doing honour to such occasions, and everything new they could invent was added. This zeal was recompensed, on the king's part, by magnificent offerings of rich palls, large sums in gold, and other valuables, to the altars and servants of Christ. Those churches, also, which he could not visit in person, were made partakers of the general joy by the gifts he sent to them. The feast of Easter was kept at the abbey of the

Holy Trinity at Fecamp, where a great number of bishops, abbots, and nobles assembled. Earl Radulph, father-in-law of Philip, King of France, with many of the French nobility, were also there, beholding with curiosity the long-haired natives of English-Britain, and admiring the garments of gold tissue, enriched with bullion, worn by the king and his courtiers. They also were greatly struck with the beauty of the gold and silver plate, and the horns tipped with gold at both extremities. The French remarked many things of this sort of a royal magnificence, the novelty of which made them the subject of observation when they returned home."*

When Stigand returned to England affairs had assumed a very different aspect. Such had been the conduct of the Normans, that the indignation of the people was roused, and, as it were, with one breath, the nation called for a leader. They had felt the want so much, that the assistance of the late king's brother-in-law, that very Eustace of Boulogne, of whom mention has been made in the life of Archbishop Robert, had been invoked, though unfortunately he proved incompetent to command. Insurrections, forfeitures, massacres, had been the order of the day under Fitz-Osbern and Odo, bishop of Bayeux, to whom, during his absence, William had committed the reins of government. The Normans were greater barbarians than the Danes in their worst days: they resorted to every species of oppression, and were unchecked by the government. The inhabitants of the land, driven to despair and flight, were, by the want of weapons alone, prevented from rising in retaliation.

Whether it was part of the policy of William, in leaving the government in the hands of these unprincipled men, to provoke the nation to take up arms against him, in

* Ordericus Vitalis, iv. 2.

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order that he might have a pretext for the confiscation of a greater number of estates, it is impossible to say. The promptitude with which he repaired to the seat of government in England, inclines us to think that his ministers had exceeded their commission. William left Normandy so hastily, that he did not take security for the detention of the English nobles, whom he had forced to attend him as hostages.

The reports from England of the atrocious proceedings of the Normans, and perhaps the conviction that, in spite of his courtesy, William, instead of restoring them to their honours, intended to detain them as state prisoners, induced these English nobles to fly from his court.

The archbishop, always regarding Edgar Atheling as his special charge, found means to convey him to Scotland, where a kind welcome awaited them from Malcolm the king, who married Edgar's sister Margaret.*

Here, if the archbishop had possessed any genius for government or command, he might have organised measures for the relief of his country. But although Stigand was placed under circumstances which would have raised a great mind to the highest pinnacle of power, usefulness, and glory, the archbishop had not the capacity to avail himself of it. He remained an ordinary archbishop, when the times demanded an ecclesiastical hero. And because he did not become what he had not the genius to be, while the steadiness of his principles converted the enemies of his country into the persecutors of himself, his inability to attempt what a really great man could have accomplished, left him without a partisan, perhaps without a friend.

* Margaret's daughter married Henry I. In her the Saxon line was restored, and through her our present gracious Sovereign traces her descent from Woden.

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Although he remained in obscurity during the flight into Scotland, we find him bearing a prominent part in the Camp of Refuge.

The Camp of Refuge was formed in Ely, then an island, standing just above the bogs and marshes, which formed the northern part of Cambridgeshire. Here, in what the chroniclers called the land of marsh and rushes, was erected upon piles a noble monastery, and this was the place which the persecuted English selected, to make their stand against the atrocities of the barbarian Normans. Hither came the Earls Morcar and Edwin, and here we find the archbishop with his treasures. He came not as a miser. He made a display of his silver and gold, now that he was in a place of security, where it was important that soldiers should know that if they fought valiantly they would be paid liberally. He was attended by his moneyers, men who were prepared to convert the silver and gold into money, whenever money was in demand. And he sought to animate the zeal of the monks of Ely, of whose patriotism doubts might be entertained, by costly presents to their church.*

The place was a secure one. It was with great difficulty accessible to individuals, or to small bodies of men, but protected by marsh and morass, and surrounded by a whole army of willows and rushes, it seemed to be unapproachable by any large body of troops, and more especially by cavalry, which was the chief arm of the Normans.

But the English had to do with a man whose genius had delighted, from his earliest years, in overcoming difficulties which appeared to be insurmountable.

For a short time, the hopes of the patriots revived. They obtained what they wanted in the noble Hereward,

* Liber Eliensis; Anglia Sacra, i. 609.

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a leader and a hero. His gallant exploits were for many generations the subject of popular songs, and the rapidity of his movements, as well as the success of his various stratagems, for he was thoroughly skilled in the art of war, induced his opponents to regard him as a magician.

But William steadily persevered in his operations. He constructed bridges over the channels of the rivers; dykes and causeways over the marshes. The Camp of Refuge was invested by land and by water. The patriots, however, under Hereward, were still able to resist, and had still the chance of gaining a decisive battle, if the cause had not been betrayed by the dastardly monks of Ely, who were impatient under the miseries occasioned by the blockade; and that the monks might eat, the patriots died.*

The troops of the Normans, through the treachery of the monks, suddenly penetrated the island. A thousand English were killed. Hereward escaped, and disgusted by the conduct of those who were unworthy of freedom, made his peace with the Conqueror—the rest were made prisoners, and among them Stigand.†

The archbishop was no longer met by processions; the Conqueror did not rise to salute him; he was treated as a felon, and loaded with chains. A stranger already occupied his throne at Canterbury.

Stigand had been deposed by the sanction of foreign prelates in the year 1070.

In the life of Archbishop Robert mention has been made of the improvement which had commenced in the Roman Church. The piety of Leo IX. and the policy of the

* Ingulf.

† The Annals of the Church of Winchester, p. 356, simply state that Stigand was arrested by the king's command in 1072, and placed in the town of Winchester, which clearly shows that he was not present at the council which deposed him, as he would have been immediately seized, if the Conqueror could have laid his hands on him.

celebrated Hildebrand gave effect to the Pseudo-Isidore decretals, which having been silently making their way in Europe since the middle of the ninth century, were now to be fearlessly maintained and vigorously enforced.

Powerful intellects, if not kept apart by circumstances, feel the force of attraction, and William the Bastard and Hildebrand, the *de-facto* pope, had long understood one another. Hildebrand perceived that William, who united caution and wisdom with valour, was more than a match for the noble but impetuous Harold, and had secured the papal sanction for the Norman invasion.

William knew the value of superstition, if not of religion, and sought the aid of high spiritual authority to dishearten his opponents, and confirm the courage of his adherents; through the malediction on the one hand, and the blessing on the other, of the papal authorities.

And now when he had determined to effect a revolution in the Church as well as in the State, he again invoked the aid of Hildebrand, who, although Alexander II. occupied the papal chair, was still *de-facto* Pope. His object was to oust the English from their preferments, and to prefer the Normans. Bishops had been before deposed by the Church of England, and sometimes through the authority of the king. This had been the case with Stigand himself, at the commencement of Edward the Confessor's reign. But William could not expect an English synod to do his work in making way for the rule of foreigners, and the spirit of the age would not have tolerated the exertion of the royal prerogative, when that consisted in the sole will of a despot, against the ecclesiastical authorities and the rights of the Church. He had recourse therefore to Hildebrand, who was ever on the watch to establish that spiritual dominion, on the establishment of which he imagined the peace of Europe to depend. He sent legates into England by the authority of the Pope, to depose

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not Stigand only, but all the native prelates who refused to succumb to the ecclesiastical policy of the Conqueror. But Hildebrand was not a man to do things by halves. The legates from Rome propounded the novel doctrine of the decretals. Having summoned the English prelates to attend the council, they addressed them, saying, "The Church of Rome has the right to superintend all Christians. and it more especially behoves her to make inquiry into your deportment and manner of life, you whom she has instructed in the faith of Christ, and to remedy the decline among you of that faith which you hold from her. It is to exercise over you this salutary inspection that we, the ministers of the blessed Apostle Peter, and authorised representatives of our lord the Pope Alexander, have resolved to hold a council with you to seek out and uproot the evil things that pullulate in the vineyard of the Lord, and to plant others in their place, profitable to the body and the soul."*

The English prelates were then deposed, and made to swear that they would make no attempt to regain the dignities from which they were displaced. Stigand, absent, and if not in arms, yet, through his treasures, fighting his country's battle, was condemned unheard.

And here we may be permitted to pause that a few observations may be offered upon the unjust treatment which Stigand has received from the Anglo-Norman conquerors, whose libels have been too generally repeated by modern writers as historical facts.

Stigand was neither a hero nor a saint. He did not possess the moral force or the intellectual power which enables a great mind to make adverse circumstances a stepping-stone to usefulness and honour; and he did not possess the meaner ambition of those who, failing in the

*. Wilkins, i. 323.

arena of manly contest, are satisfied with the effeminate applause which is elicited by sentimentalism and romance. But Stigand was a sturdy patriot, in whose breast beat an honest English heart. He hated the French, and their hatred was more powerful than his, for the Norman had not only the power of the sword, he was master also of the literature of the age.

It is less difficult by a negative process to vindicate the character of Stigand than at first sight appears. The King and the Pope conspired to depose him. They could neither of them tolerate the inflexible Englishman, or permit him to preside over the English church. But tyranny delights to act under legal forms. There was, as we have seen, the formality of a council to condemn him. Whatever could be brought against him would, we may be quite certain, under these circumstances, be laid to his charge. When, therefore, we find that they who were anxious to produce sufficient grounds for his condemnation, did not condemn him for that conduct recorded or insinuated against him by the religious libellers of the day, we may feel confident that the persecuted archbishop ought on these points to stand acquitted.

When, for example, Ordericus Vitalis, a Frenchman in heart and residence, though born in England, having asserted of Stigand that his hands were stained by perjury and homicide*, we find not the slightest allusion to these offences in the council, we may feel sure that zeal for the Norman cause had crushed, in this instance, all sense of charity and justice in the heart of Ordericus, and this charge falls to the ground. In like manner it was customary to accuse him of a want of learning. He may not have been a brilliant scholar; but that Stigand was

* Ordericus Vitalis, iv. 6.

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not in any marked way deficient in this respect is evident, not only from the fact that, in the council, this was not made a ground of accusation against him, but by that which makes the case in his favour the more remarkable, the further fact, that by the same council, on this very ground,—want of learning, sentence of deprivation was pronounced upon Wulfstan, bishop of Worcester.

The charge of covetousness, however, is the grand charge brought against Stigand, and it is repeated with so much abhorrence by the Normans, that modern historians have supposed that, in this respect, nothing can be said in the archbishop's behalf. If this, indeed, had been laid to his charge at the council which deposed him, the archbishop would have been able to appeal, his enemies being his judges, to his liberal benefactions to the monastery at Canterbury *, and to the church at Ely†, where the Conqueror himself seized a vestment presented by Stigand, "than which the nation could not show a richer." Gervas informs us that, upon his death, there was discovered a little key, which he had hidden, and this opened the lock of a chest in his bedchamber; by which means, were brought to view the countless treasures he had heaped up.‡ Memorandums were also found which revealed the value and weight of various precious metals which had been buried in his different estates.§ Now here we may observe that he was not a man of expensive habits, and that it was not for his own sake that he was hoarding. He had no family, and did not bequeath his wealth to his heirs. He knew that he would be canonised, if he had left his riches to a monastery. He died a prisoner,

* Gervas, 1651.

† Hist. Eliensis; Ang. Sax. i. 610.

‡ Gervas, 1652.

§ See also Radulph de Diceto; Anglia Sacra, ii. 677.

loaded with irons *, and was aware that he possessed the means of purchasing his liberty. We have only the choice left of two conclusions; either he was a mean-spirited craven, which, though insinuated, his whole history denies, or he had an object both in hoarding and in concealing his riches. Every act of his life seems to indicate what that object was. He never despaired of the fortunes of his country. He hoped to the last that his countrymen would rise to expel the Norman and reassert the Anglo-Saxon dominion, and he was well aware that war could not be conducted without a well-filled treasury. If he was a miser, he was still a patriot, hoarding not for himself, but for his country.

Stigand was, in point of fact, accused of only three crimes. The holding of the see of Winchester *in commendam* with the see of Canterbury; the officiating in the pall of Robert, his predecessor; and the having received his own pall from an anti-pope, Benedict.

The hypocrisy of the accusers and judges, the monks and legates, in condemning Stigand, for the first of these alleged offences is apparent in the circumstance, that these very men were prepared to accept as a saint, Archbishop Dunstan, by whom the very same thing had been done. In the life of the great prelate last mentioned, we vindicated him from the charge of sordid motives, and showed that in holding his pluralities he was probably influenced only by a desire to uphold the interests of his party. He wished to keep out the secular clergy, and he retained the preferment until he was secure of a Benedictine successor. But this feeling must have been still more influential with Stigand. It was not indeed a question with him as to Benedictines or

* See Ang. Sac. i. 250.

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seculars, but his desire and determination was, to prevent the nomination of a Norman, especially to such a see as Winchester, that city being the capital of Wessex.

In regard to his use of Archbishop Robert's pallium we are to remember that although the court of Rome had begun to regard the pallium as necessary to qualify an archbishop for his office, this was not the doctrine of the Church of England. The archbishops had exercised their authority here, some without receiving a pallium, others long before it arrived. It was regarded simply as a decoration: a grand robe, such as the state robe of the Lord High Chancellor of the present day. On certain occasions the Lord High Chancellor ought to wear his grand robe, although his being arrayed in an ordinary gown would not invalidate his judicial acts or judgments, and he might obtain the loan of his predecessor's robe until his own should be made. Even as regards this second count, on which, in the absence of more serious charges, he was condemned, namely, that he wore cast-off clothes, we may suspect he only followed the example of his predecessors. Their palliums were kept, and were the property of their successors, as we have already seen in the life of Siric. And it is probable that the old pallium was always used till the new one arrived. That Stigand did receive a pallium* is, I think, clear from the charge brought against him that his pallium was sent by a Pope, afterwards pronounced to be an anti-pope. But to this charge the answer is given concisely by Hume, who, though not often the defender of an archbishop, remarks that the crimes of Stigand were mere pretences: as Benedict, from whom the pall was obtained, was the only Pope who

* Inett thinks that he never did receive a pall, and argues the point well, at i. 386.

then officiated, and as his acts were never repealed, all the prelates of the Church, especially those who lay at a distance, were excusable for making their application to him.

Returning now to our history, we find that while the other deprived prelates were conducted to a fortress or a monastery, Archbishop Stigand was condemned to perpetual seclusion in some prison in Winchester.

It was known that he was still in possession of great treasures, and in order to persuade him to resign them into the hands of the Conqueror, or to mention where they were concealed, William sometimes relaxed the severity of his sentence, and permitted him to enjoy some little freedom; but when these measures failed, he put him in irons and left him without the common necessaries of life.

The archbishop was entreated by friends, or seeming friends, to save himself from the miseries to which he was exposed; but he could not, being a prisoner, employ his wealth to relieve his wants without betraying to the enemies of his country the secret places where his treasures were concealed.

He saw his brave countrymen prostrate beneath the tyranny of a foreign king, who was backed by a foreign nobility, surrounded by a foreign hierarchy, and supported by foreign mercenaries; who perpetrated with impunity the worst and foulest deeds, for the like of which the pagan Danes had been subjected to the execration of Christians. He thought the yoke would prove intolerable, and that to break it some hero would arise to whom he was preparing to act as treasurer, or to bequeath his wealth. But the hero came not. The broken-hearted patriot died, and the key which could unlock his treasures being found, his wealth enriched the Norman to whom his whole life had been an opposition.

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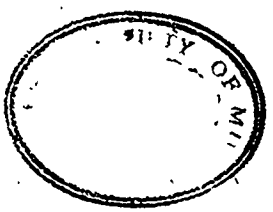
Thus perished the last Anglo-Saxon Archbishop of Canterbury. William conquered the territory; Hildebrand subdued the Church; but neither kingcraft nor priestcraft, though for a time triumphant, could finally annihilate the indomitable spirit of independence which, inherited from our Saxon ancestors, is the glory and the characteristic of the English race.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



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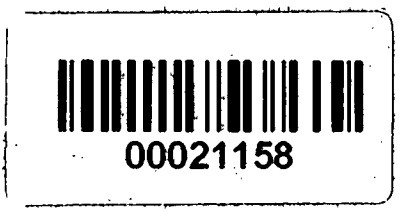
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